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# *I Remember*

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*Being the Memoirs of Mrs. John Herndon  
(Maria Aurelia Williams) James together  
with Contemporary Historical Events and  
Sketches of Her Own and Her Husband's  
Families.*

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*Edited and Compiled*

*by*

**Charles Albert Sloane**

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**THE NAYLOR COMPANY**

**SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS**

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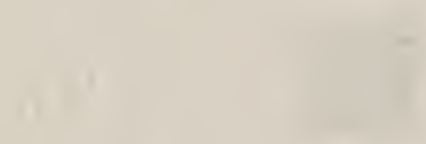
# 1. Remembrance

2.

Many of the things which we have seen  
in the world are very different from  
those which we have seen in the  
world of the past and the future.

There are many things

which are different from



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*I Remember*

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*Mrs. Maria Aurelia Williams James, when a girl*





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*Dedicated to*

*The Memory*

*of*

*My Mother and Father*



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## CHAPTER I

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"I remember," says Mrs. John Herndon (Maria Aurelia Williams) James.

With unusual clarity she *does* remember, a multitude of events which have become part of the proud history of a great State and a cosmopolitan city—Texas and San Antonio. Her memory stretches back almost three-quarters of a century.

She first opened her baby eyes on the then straggling city of San Antonio in 1859. She not only lived to see the enormous development attained by 1937 but she became, in her rightful heritage, the intimate friend of the families of men so illustrious their names will shine forever from the pages of American history.

For Maria Williams is a grandniece of John Tyler, tenth President of the United States, and a more distant relative of General Robert E. Lee. She is a direct descendant of Goeffrey, count of Anjou, who through his



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marriage to Matilda, daughter of Henry the First of England, founded the line of Plantagenet kings the first of which, Goeffrey's son, was Henry the Second. She counts among later ancestors some of the brilliant early settlers of Virginia including Edward Lukin and Sir John Page, the latter being better known in America as Colonel John Page.

And her husband, the late Judge John Herndon James, was a noted Texas jurist, son of a widely known pioneer, John James, who came to the Lone Star State a century ago, in 1837, and had part in making the early history of the Southwest.

"Ama," as Mrs. James is affectionately known to her family and intimate friends, can picture vividly the San Antonio of the '60's. She also recalls the scenes of horror and terror during the closing days of the War Between the States. For her father, Colonel Thomas Greenhow Williams, was on duty as a member of the Confederate General Staff in Richmond throughout the war. His family went from Texas to join him there shortly after the outbreak of hostilities.

So she was in the midst of the fighting around Richmond. She remembers particularly the final stages of the struggle, the flames that destroyed much of the city when at last the Confederates were forced to





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evacuate and the Federals marched in—remember the noisy entrance of the Union troops and the terror of their presence.

There are, however, many much more pleasant memories. Returning to Texas after the war she has spent most of her life either in the city of San Antonio or in its immediate vicinity, and she finds remembrance of her childhood days, and of the later years of her maturity, very sweet.

Mrs. James holds membership in a number of exceedingly exclusive organizations. She is a member of the Colonial Dames, having eligibility five times on her father's side and four times on her mother's. She belongs to the Dames of the First Families of Virginia through her descent from Edward Lukin, who came to this country in 1607. She is a member of the National Society of the Magna Charta through descent from Thomas de Quincey, famous English author. Recently she has become a member of the highly exclusive Plantagenet Society, restricted to the descendants of Goeffrey, founder of the famed dynasty of English kings which took the name.

Yet illustrious forbears have in no wise spoiled her gentle friendliness and interest in people and events. She likes people, believes in people, and holds steadfastly to the



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belief that there is good in every living person.

Maria Williams was born in San Antonio October 6, 1859, the third child of Colonel Thomas Greenhow Williams and his wife, Mary Christiana Tyler Curtis Williams. Her mother was the daughter of Doctor Henry Curtis, famous Virginia physician, whose wife, Christiana Tyler, was a sister of President John Tyler.

"I remember hearing a great deal about the wedding of my father and mother," Mrs. James says. "It was a full military wedding. Three of my father's classmates from West Point acted as groomsmen, and the great Washington beau, General Beverly Robinson, who always was in demand to lead cotillions, was present."

The marriage was solemnized at high noon at Puccoon, the plantation home of Doctor Henry Curtis, the bride's father, about twelve miles southeast of Richmond.

Ten years later the Curtis plantation was ravished by fierce fighting between northern and southern troops. The building which witnessed the ceremonies was scarred with bullets and its floors were soaked with blood.

"Bullet marks still can be seen," Mrs. James says, "and the blood stains never have been entirely removed."

Probably nobody ever was more inade-





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quately equipped, either by experience or training, to face the rigors and hardships of the then untamed Southwest than the little bride from Puccoon.

"As a bride," Mrs. James recalls, "my mother came to Fort Duncan, across the Rio Grande from Piedras Negras. She was raised like a hot house plant.

"Her Aunt Maria would call, 'Mary, come and see how these cherry preserves are made.' To which my grandfather (Doctor Curtis) would reply, 'Let her alone. I want her to grow up like a little flower.'

"And like a flower she did grow. Her chief accomplishment was sewing a fine seam. She also was a splendid musician. She taught me to sing. I sang soprano and when she joined me with her alto, it was very hard for me to hold the tune. I remember our favorite song was, 'Oh, for a Closer Walk with God.' My father's favorite was 'Sweet Hour of Prayer.' "

Such was the little bride who bravely went with the man she loved to Texas.

Colonel Williams, at that time he was Lieutenant Williams of the United States Army, having graduated from West Point in 1849, was stationed at Fort Duncan. He had secured leave in order to return to his old Virginia home to claim his bride.

The wedding occurred on July 12, 1852.



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Lieutenant Williams took his bride on to Washington where he asked for an extension of his leave. Because of the need of his services, however, it was refused. The honeymoon included a trip to New York, but it had to be cut short in order to start the return to Texas.

In 1852 it was a long way to the Southwest. The bridal couple traveled by rail to Wheeling, then Virginia, now West Virginia. There they embarked on a river boat and made the long voyage down the Ohio and then the Mississippi rivers to New Orleans. There they embarked again on a ship that landed them in Indianola, Texas.

At that time Indianola was the most important port in the southwestern section of Texas. The beach on which the town was built was about three hundred yards in width and about a mile long. There were only two streets, on which all of the buildings, residences and mercantile houses, faced.

Indianola had the advantage of its nearest neighbor and rival, Port Lavaca, in that coastwise steamers could land there safely and ocean going ships could anchor within a reasonable distance down the bay and discharge their cargoes by lighters. At Port Lavaca there was danger of grounding, even the smaller vessels, and a channel had to be kept open by means of a steam dredge.





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The rivalry between the two ports is reported to have been both extreme and amusing. Each accused the other of being unhealthy. Port Lavacans sarcastically referred to Indianola, which was considerably the larger of the two, as "a little village down the bay where our vessels sometimes land goods on their way up."

It was months later that the young Virginia couple returned to Indianola to make their temporary home there, Lieutenant Williams having been transferred to that post. It was at Indianola that his first two children were born. It was there the young people met and became well acquainted with Mr. and Mrs. William Polk Milby, grandparents of the young man whom the yet unborn Maria Williams one day was to marry.

"Indianola," Mrs. James says, "was a magnificent seaport of Texas having deep water where ships from all over the world came to anchor. Most of the supplies for the southwestern portion of the state were received through Indianola."

History records that supplies of all kinds were freighted by ox carts, for the most part, to San Antonio and other towns in the region, the trip from the coast requiring many days. In fact the only advantage historians ascribe to Port Lavaca over Indianola was that it was twelve miles closer to San



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Antonio and other destinations of the wagon trains, a distance which meant a great deal in those days of tortuously slow travel.

"My parents had been married three years when the first child, my sister Fanny, was born at Indianola," Mrs. James relates. "She married Colonel Edwin J. Gresham of Richmond, Virginia. There also my brother, Curtis, was born.

"The day my sister, Fanny, arrived my father sent an orderly to the store for a carriage he had purchased for the new baby. The orderly misunderstood my father. He harnessed a pair of the most handsome mules at headquarters and with the finest equipment he could find, with whip and reins in hand, arrived at the door of the store to demand, in no uncertain terms, the carriage Lieutenant Williams had bought.

"When the kind storekeeper, all smiles, wheeled out one of the most beautiful baby carriages ever seen in Indianola, it was much to the amazement and chagrin of the orderly. He couldn't very well hitch his mules to that kind of a carriage!

"This port of entry was a beautiful little town and many of the great families of Texas lived there for awhile. Included was the Herff family and many other dear friends of my mother's and father's. Among them







## I REMEMBER

also were Mr. and Mrs. Milby, grandparents of my husband.

“When my parents were leaving Indianola, my father having been transferred to San Antonio for duty, Mr. Milby and many of the citizens came to bid them farewell. Mr. Milby mounted a table and paid a glowing tribute to my father and mother and expressed the regrets of the people of Indianola at their departure.”

On the first visit to Indianola, however, the bridal couple did not tarry. Lieutenant Williams had to press on to his post at Fort Duncan. There yet remained days of hard travel to reach his post, overland to San Antonio and thence westward through Castroville and Quihi, and on across a practically uninhabited strip of country, occasionally infested with Indians, to the outpost on the Rio Grande at Eagle Pass.

Some of those whom Lieutenant Williams and his wife met and later came to know well remained at Indianola until it was nearly destroyed in 1875. Among those of marked prominence who lived there in the early days were Dan Sullivan, who later became a noted private banker in San Antonio; M. D. Montserrate, who afterwards was vice president and general manager of the San Antonio & Aransas Pass Railroad, and Doc-



## I REMEMBER

tor Ferdinand von Herff, Nestor of the medical profession in San Antonio.

What was once the most important port in Southwest Texas is now completely abandoned. Indianola is hardly more than a name.

On September 15, 1875, a violent wind storm began pounding the enterprising little city of about two thousand people. By the morning of September 16 the wind had risen to a gale. Still the population was not in particular fear. There had been heavy winds before and no serious damage had been done.

Before that day was ended, however, the wind had reached hurricane proportions, had driven water across the bar between the Gulf and the inner waterway, cutting a passage through the sand, and Indianola was flooded. Houses were going down. The business district was completely inundated.

About midnight of that terrible day the wind suddenly veered from northeast to northwest. A number of buildings which, up to that time, had stood against the storm, crumpled and fell. A tidal wave was swirling through the streets, carrying the unwilling bodies of a considerable proportion of the inhabitants in the midst of a wide assortment of debris.

The wind had died down by morning of September 17 and the town was practically





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free of water. It gave the survivors a chance to count their losses. Something over two hundred persons were missing, or their bodies were found lodged in debris. Among them was Thomas Decrow, who had founded the town in 1834, and the members of his family. Included also were all the lighthouse keepers.

A remnant of the population remained, however, and for a time carried on the business of the once thriving town. The port became less important with the completion, in 1877, of the Galveston, Harrisburg and San Antonio Railroad, the first to be constructed through that part of Texas.

But on August 20, 1886, not quite eleven years after the first disaster, another storm struck Indianola. It completed the demolition the first had begun. It is said not a building was left standing and raging water again swept the streets of the little city. This time no effort was made to re-establish the port. It was abandoned.

Its nearby neighbor and rival, Port Lavaca, having been built on higher ground, suffered somewhat from wind but escaped the water. It has remained, and the county seat was moved there.

Thus passed out of existence one of the early settlements of Texas which, for a time,



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had been an important gateway for immigrants and supplies, having had its part in the development of the Lone Star State.

### CHAPTER II

There are many stories of the early days of the river, and many of them are true. The first story is of the first settlement on the river, the settlement of the French. The French were the first to settle on the river, and they were the first to build a fort on the river. The fort was built on the river, and it was the first fort on the river. The fort was built on the river, and it was the first fort on the river. The fort was built on the river, and it was the first fort on the river.

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## CHAPTER II

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"There was almost nothing in San Antonio north of the river when my mother first saw the city," Mrs. James says. "San Pedro Springs, where the park is located, was far out in the country. Between it and the little city was a thick tangle of chaparral and mesquite. It was still a wild tangle of brush when I first remember it—when as a child I used to go out there sometimes.

"The streets were very narrow and very dirty. None were paved until the time of Mayor Bryan Callaghan. Then mesquite blocks were used for paving.

"There were a few footbridges over the river. Horses and vehicles crossed almost everywhere by fording the stream, although in a good many places it was not fordable."

As a matter of fact the city boasted something like 5,000 inhabitants in 1852. The official census sets the figure at 3,500 in 1850 and at 6,000 in 1853. There were



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three almost equal divisions—Mexicans, Germans and Americans.

“The river,” Mrs. James continues, “was used by those who lived on its banks not only for drinking water but also for lavatory, laundry purposes and for bathing. I don’t see how anybody managed to live through it. I suppose it was a case of survival of the fittest.”

An interesting comment on the river in the early days is contained in Sweet and Knox’s *On a Mexican Mustang Through Texas*. It reads:

“The San Antonio River, even as late as twenty-five years ago, was a clear, rapid brook, gliding onward to the sea to the melodious cadence of the mockingbird’s song, etc. Now it looks as if it had just made its escape from a laundry. The temperature of the water is the same, winter and summer. It is not as good for drinking purposes as it used to be. The habit of depositing cats, and other luxuries that the citizens have no further use for, in the stream, coupled with the inability of the slow current to transport them outside the city limits until they have become infirm with age, has done much to make cistern water popular. According to the most reliable tradition, the principal use the Spaniards and Mexicans had for the river, after using it to irrigate the land, was





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to bathe in it—a pious ceremony, that has fallen into neglect as far as their descendants are concerned. It was the custom for all ages and sexes to bathe promiscuously together. In fact, when the Americans began to settle in the Alamo City, and put up canvas-covered bathhouses, the astonished natives could not understand what they were for. In a *Personal Narrative*, written by the abbe, Moses Domenech (a French priest who visited Texas in 1845), when describing San Antonio, the modest abbe says—‘Close to the house was a stream of clear water, where the washing business of the town was done, and in which the women bathed publicly. My window was in view of all their gambolings. I was therefore obliged to keep it closed during the day.’

“At the present time both banks of the river are, for miles, studded with bathhouses floating on empty whiskey barrels. Almost everybody, except Mexicans, bathes; and, during the heated term, a bare-headed clerk in his shirt sleeves, darting across Commerce Street with a towel and a piece of soap under his arm, is a permanent feature of the landscape.”

Doctor Pat Ireland Nixon quotes this description in his *A Century of Medicine in San Antonio*.

From *A Journey Through Texas*, which





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by the way was made in 1850, only a short time before the little Virginia bride first beheld the place which was to be her home for all the latter part of her life, Frederick Law Olmsted gives a graphic description of the town.

“The singular composite character of the town is palpable at the entrance,” he wrote. “For five minutes (on horseback, of course) the houses were evidently German, of fresh square-cut blocks of creamy-white limestone, mostly of a single story and humble proportions, but neat, and thoroughly roofed and finished. Some were furnished with the luxuries of little bow-windows, balconies, or galleries.

“From these we enter the square of the Alamo. This is all Mexican. Windowless cabins of stakes, plastered with mud and roofed with river-grass, or ‘tula’; or low, windowless cabins, but better thatched, houses of adobes (gray, unburnt bricks), with groups of brown idlers lounging at their doors.

“The principal part of the town lies within a sweep of the river upon the other side. We descend to a bridge, which is close down upon the water, as the river, owing to its peculiar source, never varies in height or temperature. We irresistibly stop to examine it, we are so struck with its beauty. It is of





*Mrs. Mary Curtis Williams, mother of Maria A. James*





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rich blue and pure as crystal, flowing rapidly but noiselessly over pebbles and between reedy banks. One could lean for hours over the bridge-rail.

"From the bridge we enter Commerce Street, the narrow principal thoroughfare, and here are American homes, and the triple nationalities break out into the most amusing display, till we reach the main plaza."

Later describing what he calls "town life" Mr. Olmsted relates incidents which show how untamed the section was at that time.

"The street affrays are numerous and characteristic," he wrote. "I have seen, for a year or more, a San Antonio weekly, and hardly a number fails to have its fight or its murder. More often than otherwise, the parties meet upon the plaza by chance, and each, on catching sight of his enemy, draws a revolver, and fires away. As the actors are under more or less excitement, their aim is not apt to be of the most careful and sure, consequently it is, not seldom, the passers-by who suffer. Sometimes it is a young man at a quiet dinner in a restaurant, who receives a ball in his head; sometimes an old Negro woman, returning from market, who gets winged. After disposing of all their lead, the parties close, to try their steel, but as this species of metallic amusement is less popular, they generally contrive to be





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separated (Hold me! Hold me!) by friends before the wounds are mortal. If neither is seriously injured, they are brought to drink together on the following day, and the town waits for the next excitement."

It was into such an environment that the "little flower" bride from cultured, refined Virginia came to make her home with her soldier-husband.

Mrs. James recalls pitched battles, with the river for a barrier, between the young sons of Doctor Herff on one side and those of John James, her husband's father, on the other. The James home faced on Commerce Street at about the present location of the Western Union building. The grounds included space now occupied by the Casino Club and adjacent buildings, the back yard extending to the river. On the north side, facing Houston Street, was the Herff home. Its grounds extended south to the river including space now occupied by the Nix Professional building. Sons of the families had a great time throwing missiles at each other from behind barricades on either side of the river.

Mrs. James remembers also when the land where the City Auditorium stands was the vegetable garden for the Ursuline Convent and school. In this connection it is noteworthy that the clock tower at the convent



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has no face on the north side. There seemed so little likelihood there ever would be anybody living on that side that when the tower was built it was not thought worth while to place a clock face there!

At the time of the birth of her own first baby, more than thirty years after her mother's first sight of San Antonio, Mrs. James recalls that the streets were in terrible condition.

"My husband," she says, "had engaged Solomon, the janitor at the courthouse, to go for Aunt Susan (colored nurse). The courthouse was then located on Soledad Street at the present location of Solo Serve. So after going by Doctor Herff's in his buggy to ask Doctor Adolph to come, he went to the courthouse. Solomon was out sweeping the sidewalks. He put down the broom, Mr. James got out of the buggy and turned it over to him.

"Aunt Susan lived beyond the Sunset depot. The streets were in a dreadful condition, there having been constant rains and no pavements. It made slow traveling. Aunt Susan was out in the yard feeding her chickens. But she soon had on a fresh apron and a handkerchief on her head and she and Solomon were on their way back to us.

"Just after Solomon brought Aunt Susan





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Doctor Herff arrived, looking very splendid as his father's successor in medicine. His father had brought all of my father's family into the world and had asked us to take his son, excusing himself on account of age. We all loved the great Herff family dearly.

"It was not long after they came that my daughter was born, without the use of chloroform, although the bottle stood on the mantel, and by the light of one candle. Doctor Herff refused to use any chloroform. He said I didn't need it."

By contrast Mrs. James related an incident of the birth of a modern baby in her family. The mother, she said, went to a hospital. She had not one doctor but two or three and several special nurses. The baby arrived while the mother was in twilight sleep, or something like that, so she did not even know when it was born. And—

"The entire expense of my first baby was about twenty-five dollars," says Mrs. James. "That other baby cost about five hundred. It isn't any wonder young people are afraid of marriage these days. Babies cost so much."

The little Virginia bride made only a short stop in the Alamo City on her first visit. There still remained days of travel before her soldier-husband could reach his station. The trip from San Antonio to Fort Duncan not





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only was a hard one through the dust and heat, but also the party needed constantly to be on the lookout for snooping Comanches. They pressed on west to Castroville, Quihi, D'Hanis (spelled in the older books Dhanis) and thus to Fort Inge, the "military outpost of the district."

Castroville in the '50's boasted an excellent hotel, a veritable oasis of charm in the midst of the desert of uncouth wildness.

Speaking of it in his *A Journey Through Texas* Mr. Olmsted says, "Perhaps the most remarkable thing is the hotel, by M. Tardé, a two-story house, with double galleries, and the best inn we saw in the state. How delighted and astonished many a traveler must have been, on arriving from the plains at this first village, to find not only his dreams of white bread, sweetmeats and potatoes realized, but napkins, silver forks, and radishes, French servants, French neatness, French furniture, delicious French beds, and the *Courrier des Etas Unis*; and more, the lively and entertaining bourgeoisie."

Mrs. James remembers hearing much about this same inn.

"My father was en route to Fort Duncan with a detachment of troops," she says. "They stopped in Castroville late in the afternoon to remain over night. When dinner was announced my father went down to



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take his place at the table in the hotel run by Mr. Tardé, a French gentleman, and his wife.

"When he entered the dining room he was amazed at the splendor of the table. The finest of linen, silver and glass adorned the festive board. At one end sat Mrs. Tardé in full evening dress, wearing a diamond necklace and other rare jewels. At the other end sat Mr. Tardé, in full evening attire also.

"It was their custom to dine thus every evening. My father said he never felt more embarrassed as he was wearing a faded service uniform, and it was an occasion for full dress.

"An instance such as this in the wilderness of early Texas was one never to be forgotten.

"It was my good fortune in later years to have given me for my birthday by my husband one of the Tardé diamonds set in jet in a cross. It was made by Mr. A. Sartor, noted jeweler, and had been blessed by the first a Catholic Bishop of Southwest Texas."

As a matter of fact, when Judge James learned that the Tardé diamonds were for sale, he offered his wife the entire set, but she decided the cross was the only piece she wanted.

"Wasn't that silly of me?" she laughs.





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So it was to that remarkable inn that the young army officer took his bride for the first stop after leaving San Antonio. The next place was Quihi, a scattering village; then D'Hanis, described by early travelers as "a hamlet upon the verge of the great American wilderness." From there they went to Fort Inge.

Fort Duncan, the destination of the bridal couple, was about sixty miles from Fort Inge. The route lay through an utterly wild country. Marauding bands of Comanches made every passage between the two posts hazardous. It was not uncommon to hear that somebody, perhaps it was the mail rider who kept making round trips from San Antonio to the border and back, had been attacked and perhaps scalped.

In his description of Fort Inge Mr. Olmsted says, "The buildings were all very rough and temporary, some of the officers' lodgings being mere *jacals* of sticks and mud. But all were white-washed and neatly kept, by taste and discipline."

Regarding the officers he found there the same writer says, "We found our hosts gentlemen of spirit and education, upholding in social bearing the reputation which the officers of our army have always maintained—preserving on the rough and lazy border





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the cultivation belonging to a more brilliant position."

And then, "At Fort Duncan, a more important post, which we visited a few days later, a fine band played upon a terrace at the close of evening, and a bevy of fashionably-dressed ladies added a strange feature to the remote scene," wrote Mr. Olmsted.

So it may be hoped that the little bride, even in the Texas wilderness, found something resembling the culture and refinement she had left in Virginia, and perhaps did not become so very lonesome, even though she was so far from her home and friends.

Fort Duncan was located on the Rio Grande River adjoining the town of Eagle Pass. It was established in 1849 and was one of a string of military establishments on the International border. It was among the group of forts surrendered by General Twiggs to the Confederates on February 18, 1861. It finally was abandoned in 1905, having been reoccupied by Federal troops in 1868.

It was built originally to resist raids on the part of lawless elements, particularly Lipans and Comanches, from beyond the river. The reservation contained about eighteen square miles and was leased from John Twohig, San Antonio pioneer, who was paid \$1,560 a year for it.



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Fort Inge, which also was established in 1849, was located just south of where the city of Uvalde now stands. It was abandoned in 1853 but was reoccupied in 1857. It also was among those surrendered by General Twiggs and never afterward was occupied by Federal troops. It was used by Texas Rangers, however, until 1882.

Fort Inge was the southernmost of a string of posts reaching to Fort Worth, all the way across the state, and formed what was called the first line of defense against the Indians, largely the Comanches and Apaches. These forts south of Fort Worth included Fort Graham, located in the western portion of Hill County; Fort Gates, the present site of Gatesville; Fort Croghan, situated about a mile southwest of the present city of Burnet; Fort Mason in Mason County, now the town of that name; Fort Martin Scott, where the city of Fredericksburg now stands, and Fort Lincoln, located on Seco Creek just north of D'Hanis.

Fort Croghan was notable among these posts because several officers were on duty there at various times whose names later were to become household words. Robert E. Lee, John B. Hood, George B. McClellan and Earl Van Dorn were among them. General Lee also served at Fort Mason. In fact that was his last station in Texas. It was







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his last regular assignment as an officer of the United States army because he was recalled from there to Washington by General Winfield Scott in February, 1861.

By 1853, however, the frontier had been pushed from fifty to one hundred miles farther west. A new line of defense was then established of which Fort Richardson, the present location of Jacksboro, was the northern point and Fort Clark at Brackettville, still in use by the military, was the southern extremity.

General Lee served at several of the posts in the new line. He was Lieutenant-Colonel at Fort Belknap in 1855 when Albert Sidney Johnston was Colonel in command. He also served at Fort McKavett in Menard County. The quarters he occupied at the latter post were for some time in use as a hotel.

It was at Fort Clark that Lieutenant, later General, John L. Bullis enlisted his famous Seminole scouts.

The young Virginia Lieutenant, prior to his marriage, also had served both at Fort McKavett and Fort Clark, but only a short time at either place.

Lieutenant Williams was stationed at Fort Duncan on the occasion of a big Indian raid far into the interior of Texas. Captain James Calahan called for volunteers, marshalled a small company and secured per-



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mission from Governor Pease to "follow them to South America, if necessary."

Consequently, on October 1, 1855, he crossed the Rio Grande at Eagle Pass (Fort Duncan). He overtook the Indians about thirty miles south of the river and during all one day fought a drawn battle against heavy odds, there being approximately nine hundred Indians and Mexicans pitted against him. At night the company marched back to Piedras Negras, on the Mexican side opposite Fort Duncan, and there fought another pitched battle. This time the enemy had been augmented to about 1,300. And Calahan had only eighty-five men!

So he set fire to the town of Piedras Negras and retired across the river under the guns of Fort Duncan. The town was completely burned.

Calahan reported he was given every possible help by the command at Fort Duncan. He felt his expedition had, in a measure at least, avenged losses suffered in Texas.

During the early days at Fort Duncan there was a mail stage from San Antonio twice a week. Except for the mail, and chance travelers of whom there were few, there was no other means of communication. And even the mail could not be depended upon with certainty. Between Fort Inge and Fort Duncan, particularly in the earlier





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days, the mail rider might be attacked by Indians. If he escaped with his life from such a foray he considered himself lucky.

Those who have seen or are acquainted with the Texas border in this year of Our Lord nineteen hundred thirty-seven, with its thousands of acres of gardens, citrus and other crops, its fine little cities and contented people, might have a good deal of difficulty in visualizing it as it was in 1852.

Except for scattered ranch houses there were practically no inhabitants in a strip varying from about sixty to a hundred and fifty miles wide on the Texas side of the river.

There was no timber except scattered clumps of stunted mesquite. Most of the territory was prairie, fit for nothing but to graze cattle on the sparse grass which barely covered its sandy soil. It was bleak and cheerless.

Also it was becoming a veritable Mecca for the lawless element of both Mexico and the United States, a refuge for fugitives of both countries, and also was subject to frequent raids by hostile Indians.

Lack of shade made the summer heat seem terrific. There was nothing to break the steady burning rays of the sun. Summers usually were dry. Dust kicked up, even by a small group of horsemen, rose in a choking





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cloud. It was infested with all manner of poisonous reptiles and insects from tiny fleas to huge rattlesnakes.

In fact the strip was so difficult of passage and so uninhabitable it was considered for a time as a safeguard for the rest of the state against marauding bands from below the International line. However it proved to be an insufficient barrier. Indians and other raiders crossed it without apparent difficulty.

The whole scene of the border was rough, uncouth, untamed and utterly alien to the refinement and culture of Virginia. It was bad enough for men. It must have required the extreme of courage and devotion for a woman, particularly one who had been delicately reared, to face it as did the Virginia bride and her contemporaries.

How the Texas border appealed to a soldier who was stationed there in early days is given in a bit of doggerel. The name of the soldier-author apparently is not known. The lurid description, which was entitled "Hell on Earth," follows:

The devil in hell we're told was chained,  
And a thousand years he there remained.  
He neither complained nor did he groan,  
But determined to start a hell of his own  
Where he could torment the souls of men  
Without being chained in a prison cell.



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So he asked the Lord if he had on hand  
Anything left when he made the land—  
The Lord said yes, I had plenty on hand,  
But I left it down on the Rio Grande;  
The fact is, old boy, the stuff is so poor  
I don't think you can use it as hell any more.  
But the devil went down to look at the truck,  
And after examining it carefully and well,  
Concluded the place was too dry for a hell.  
So in order to get it off his hands  
The Lord promised the devil to water the lands,  
For he had some water, or rather some dregs,  
A regular cathartic and smelled like bad eggs.  
Hence the trade was closed, the deed was given,  
And the Lord went back to his home in heaven.  
The devil said to himself, "I've all that is needed  
To make a good hell," and hence he succeeded.  
He began to put thorns on all the trees  
And mixed up the sand with millions of fleas;  
He scattered tarantulas along the road,  
Put thorns on the cactus and horns on the toad;  
He lengthened the horns on the Texas steer  
And put an addition on the rabbit's ear;  
He put a little devil in the bronco steed  
And poisoned the feet of the centipede.  
The rattle snake bites you, the scorpion stings,  
The *Musketo* delights you with his buzzing wings;  
The sand-burs prevail and so do the ants.  
Those who sit down need half soles on their pants.  
The devil then said that throughout the land  
He'd manage to keep up the devil's own brand,  
And all would be "MAVERICKS" unless they bore  
Marks, scratches, bites and thorns by the score.  
The heat in the summer is a hundred and ten,  
Too hot for the devil and too hot for men;  
The wild boar roams through the black chaparral.  
'Tis a . . . . of a place he has for a hell.







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## CHAPTER III

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Mrs. James takes pride in an illustrious ancestry. It is a quiet pride but none the less warm because she has not permitted it to interfere in her relationships with her neighbors and friends. There is nothing pompous about it. Rather it is a cherished heritage for which she is grateful.

The best records obtainable show that the Williams family originated in Wales, and that the first use of the surname occurred in about the middle of the fifteenth century. At the time of Oliver Cromwell, who himself belonged to the Williams family, there lived one John Williams from whom the family is believed to have sprung.

This John Williams was one of those who advanced funds to aid Cromwell in the conquest of Ireland in 1649, for which he was granted an estate in Ireland, located near Ulster.

But Mrs. James' ancestry has been traced



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back several hundred years before that. She is, as her membership in the Plantagenet Society proves, a direct descendant of Geoffrey, count of Anjou, husband of Matilda, daughter of Henry the First, and father of the first of the Plantagenet kings of England. The first of these kings, Henry the Second, ascended the throne in 1154. The dynasty reigned over England until 1485. Included among these kings were Henry II, Richard I, John, Henry III, Edward I, II and III, Richard II, Henry IV, V and VI, Edward IV and V and Richard III.

Perhaps best known of these sovereigns was Henry II, first of the line; Richard I, nicknamed the "Lion-Hearted"; John (Lackland), and Henry III.

The surname of her father's family undoubtedly originated in Wales as various early historians point out no record outside of Wales is found of the early patronymic. It is believed to be derived from a Welsh word. In the Cymbrian tongue (Cymric language of early Wales) it is said the word *gwyllo* means to watch. The noun is *gwilym*, pronounced very much like William, and referred to a watcher, probably a sentinel or warder. Thus the name of Williams was adopted as a surname.

Later ancestors included Thomas de Quin-







*Thomas Greenhow Williams, father of Maria A. James, and  
Mrs. Nelson, grandmother of Mrs. James*





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cey, English author; Colonel (Sir) John Page and Edward Lukin, Virginia pioneers.

Mrs. James has a copy of a portrait of Colonel Page. On the back of it is a brief history. It shows that he was baptized in the Parish of Harrow, County of Middlesex, England, on December 26, 1628, and that he died on January 23, 1692, in his sixty-fifth year. He lies buried in the old Episcopal church yard of Bruton Parish at Williamsburg, Virginia.

In the period immediately before the War Between the States the Williams family and its connections were, for the most part, wealthy planters in the vicinity of Richmond. Mrs. James' great grandfather on her mother's side was John Tyler, Sr., noted jurist, Governor of Virginia and father of the man who became President John Tyler of the United States.

The Virginia Tylers were descended from Henry Tyler who came to the colony about the middle of the sixteenth century. The Tyler lineage has been traced back to one Wat Tyler, leader of a more or less successful uprising against Richard the Second in the early part of the thirteenth century.

The Tylers were ancestors of both Mrs. James' father and mother. Thomas Greenhow Williams and Mary Christiana Tyler



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Curtis were full third cousins through the Tyler connection.

The name of the tenth President of the United States is closely connected with important events in the history of Texas. For President John Tyler was, from the first, an advocate of annexation and when the battle finally was won and the resolutions had been passed by Congress, it fell to his honor to sign them as chief executive, admitting the free republic of Texas into the United States of America.

It was the sister of the man who later became president who married the young Doctor, Henry Curtis. That he had been a close friend of young John Tyler before his marriage is proved by an interesting letter which Lyon G. Tyler reports in his book, *Letters and Times of the Tylers*.

It was while John Tyler was a member of the Virginia Legislature and shortly after his own marriage to Letitia Christian, which occurred on March 29, 1813, that the letter mentioned was written. It is a little more formal than letters previously quoted in which the physician was addressed as "Dear Henry." The letter, dated at Richmond May 18, 1813, follows:

"Dear Curtis: Previous to the reception of your letter I had written C (Christiana Tyler, his sister) for the first time upon the



There were but three persons present at the  
 the ceremony.

The ceremony was held in the hall of the  
 Grand Hotel in the city of New York. The  
 guests were the Mayor of New York, the  
 President of the United States, and the  
 Vice President of the United States. The  
 ceremony was held in the hall of the  
 Grand Hotel in the city of New York. The  
 guests were the Mayor of New York, the  
 President of the United States, and the  
 Vice President of the United States.

It was the first time in the history of the  
 United States that the President and the  
 Vice President had both been present at the  
 ceremony. The ceremony was held in the  
 hall of the Grand Hotel in the city of New  
 York. The guests were the Mayor of New  
 York, the President of the United States, and  
 the Vice President of the United States.

It was a very important ceremony and  
 it was held in the hall of the Grand Hotel  
 in the city of New York. The ceremony was  
 held in the hall of the Grand Hotel in the  
 city of New York. The guests were the  
 Mayor of New York, the President of the  
 United States, and the Vice President of the  
 United States. The ceremony was held in the  
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 the Vice President of the United States.

The ceremony was held in the hall of the  
 Grand Hotel in the city of New York. The  
 guests were the Mayor of New York, the  
 President of the United States, and the  
 Vice President of the United States.

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subject of your contemplated union. I used the same language to her, in substance, that I did to you, viz.: That I did not wish you to precipitate matters until you were placed in a situation to ensure her a competency. If that be your situation, I certainly cannot object; but of that you cannot be too certain. The very moment a man can say to himself, 'If I die tomorrow, my wife will be independent,' he is fully authorized to obey the impulse of affection. Perhaps the truth of this observation may be maintained at all times, but there can be no doubt of it in these perilous and tempestuous times. I wish you to distinctly understand that C. is only entitled to a support out of the estate until her marriage, and nothing else, until the death of Aunt Dixon, who will leave her her estate. I mention this, that you may be accurate in your calculations, and from no other motive. I thank you for your kind salutations, and beg leave to assure you that I am really, your friend.

“JOHN TYLER

“I expect we shall adjourn in the course of eight or ten days.”

It was only a short time after this letter was received that Doctor Curtis married the lady of his choice and proved his title to a wife by attaining, shortly afterward, a reputation for being one of the first physicians





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of the state. Afterward, and long after his death, his medical books were used as textbooks in a number of educational institutions.

He took his bride home to Puccoon from which place, nearly forty years later, his little "flower" daughter departed with her soldier-husband to dare the wilderness of the Southwest.

Mrs. James' paternal grandfather was Thomas Williams. He died a young man leaving his widow, who had been Frances Greenhow, with an only child four weeks old. The child was named for his father and also was given the surname of his mother's family. Thus Thomas Greenhow Williams never knew his father, but an uncle, William Williams, who was noted for his kindness and charity, took the place, as nearly as he could, of the parent the boy had lost.

"It was during one of the visits of President John Tyler to Richmond," Mrs. James remembers having been told, "that he called on my grandmother, Mrs. Williams. That winter it was quite fashionable for young boys to wear military caps. My father had one. He came home from school at recess in time to meet the President. When he entered the room he held his cap in his hand





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and stood so straight and erect it attracted the attention of the President.

“ ‘Cousin Fanny, how would you like an appointment to West Point for Tom?’ the President asked my grandmother.

“She said she had not thought of such a thing but would consider it. Later she agreed to it and the appointment was obtained. My grandmother, her sister and Uncle William Williams took my father to West Point. They went in a private carriage.

“Major General Hodges, one of my father’s classmates, told me many years later when he was on a visit to San Antonio, about that never-to-be-forgotten day when my father arrived at West Point. Besides his mother and other relatives there was a retinue of servants and carriages that seemed nearly a mile long, the General said.

“It was General Hodges who told me my father’s nickname at West Point was ‘Beaut’.

“In later years, in walking through the Arlington National cemetery, the dear familiar names of my father’s friends and classmates appeared before me. General Benet has his tomb there. In a letter not long ago from Mr. William Hollibird he said he had just returned from Paris where he met Mr. Benet. These two sons of noted





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soldiers agreed that the memory of the class of 1849 remains forever green."

Young Thomas Williams went to West Point when he was sixteen years old. It was during his cadetship and about seventeen years after his father's death that he received a remarkable letter from his mother.

A wealthy neighbor, Major Nelson, had asked her to marry him, the boy's mother wrote. However she would not consider the matter unless she had the consent of her son.

In writing back the boy said that he always had thought he would be first in his mother's heart. But he realized that he would be going out into the world and might be sent to distant posts of duty. So he felt, if it would be for his mother's best happiness, he would give his consent. Mrs. Williams thereafter married Major Nelson.

Her husband lived only two years. His estate became the basis of the considerable fortune later inherited by the young man, but which was dissipated during the war. Like his father-in-law, Doctor Curtis, and a host of other loyal Confederates, Colonel Williams invested heavily in Confederate bonds and changed his holdings into Confederate money which, after the war, of course, was valueless. So on his return to Texas after the war, with a growing little family on his hands, it became necessary for





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him to find means of earning them a livelihood.

Yet another outstanding figure in American history, and also one who took part in the war with Mexico and knew Texas well before the opening of the civil war between the states, was a kinsman of Mrs. James. General Robert E. Lee was related to the Williams family through the Childs family connections.

History shows that General Lee paid his first visit to Texas in September, 1846, coming to San Antonio to join an expedition that was being fitted out to invade Mexico. He was again assigned to duty in Texas ten years later, was in service at several frontier posts, was sent after raiding Indians, and toward the last of his service for about a year was temporary commander of the Texas department.

Meanwhile he had risen to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He was with his regiment at Fort Mason when, on February 4, 1861, he received orders to report in person to the general in chief at Washington. The old general, Winfield Scott, wanted to sound out his subordinate on the subject of secession and his loyalty to the Union. Lee insisted then as he had before that he owed primary allegiance to his native state, Virginia. After that he was a Union man. He





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did not favor secession, believing the action to be revolutionary. He said if he left the service of the United States he would not again draw his sword except in defense of his own state. He kept his word.

It was not until April 20 of the same year, 1861, after Virginia had seceded, that Lee, who in the meantime first had been promoted to be a full Colonel, and then had been offered command of a great army being raised to enforce Federal authority in seceding states, resigned and then went to Richmond. He had refused the command offered him before Virginia seceded. Afterward there was nothing to do but resign his commission.

It was about the same time that a young Lieutenant in the service of the United States at San Antonio went to Washington also for the purpose of tendering his resignation. He followed his former commander to the Virginia capital there to offer his own services to his state. Lieutenant Thomas Greenhow Williams could no more remain in the service of the Union after Virginia seceded than could Colonel Robert E. Lee.

Illustrious as have been some of the forebears of Mrs. James, there is not lack of lustre in the family of her husband.

The first member of the James family to come to Texas was John James, father of





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the late Judge John Herndon James, who, as a boy of about 18, first arrived in San Antonio in 1837. The boy had been fired with a desire to assist the gallant Texans in their battle for freedom by reading an account of the massacre at the Alamo on March 6, 1836. He fell sick on his way to Texas and did not arrive finally from his home in Nova Scotia until the following year.

Reaching San Antonio it was not long before he began making history. His first public office was assistant surveyor of Bexar County under Bob Hays, a brother of the famous Captain Jack Hays of the Texas Rangers. Bexar County at that time extended west to the Rio Grande and north to the Panhandle.

Young James became intimately acquainted with the territory and was sufficiently familiar with land grants and their field notes that after the raid by General Adrian Woll on San Antonio in 1842, when records showing the boundaries of the city were carried away or destroyed, he was able to locate the original corners, to follow the old lines and to prepare a new map of the city. This new record met the test of the courts and ultimately was upheld by the Supreme Court. To this day, it is stated, all real estate abstracts in the old city are



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based upon the James survey and the court decision holding it valid.

John James was married to Annie Milby at Port Lavaca, Texas, on October 16, 1851. They were the parents of John Herndon James who later became the husband of Maria Williams.

John James entered into partnership with his brother-in-law, James R. Sweet, and continued their business until the beginning of the war.

"I remember," says Mrs. James, "of hearing about how Mr. James met his brother-in-law when Mr. Sweet first came to San Antonio. Mr. Sweet was dressed very formally and was wearing a high silk hat.

"His brother-in-law said, 'Jim, how in the world did you get this far into Texas in a rig like that?'

"Mr. Sweet looked about him, noticed that men were looking at him very oddly, took the hat off and never wore it again."

Mr. Sweet had followed his wife's brother to Texas. Having been reared in a more conventional society he did not realize the antipathy to formal headgear felt by the plainsmen.

"It made such a target," Mrs. James says, "that it is a wonder somebody did not have an irresistible impulse to shoot it off his head."





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The antecedents of John James were Captain John Crosskill of the British navy, who settled in Nova Scotia and founded the city of Bridgetown in 1822, who was one of his grandfathers, and Alexander James II, a Sergeant Major in the British army, the paternal grandfather.

Thomas James, son of Alexander II and father of John James, came to Halifax as an officer of the British army and there met and married Ann Petty Crosskill, pretty daughter of Captain Crosskill.

James R. Sweet served several terms as mayor of San Antonio, resigning from that office in 1863 to accept a commission as Colonel in Duff's regiment during the war. He was the father of Alex Sweet, famous Texas humorist.

In his capacity of surveyor John James plotted the townsites of Castroville, D'Hanis, Boerne, Quihi and Bandera.

John Herndon James, eldest son of John James, was appointed by Governor Hogg to be Chief Justice of the Court of Civil Appeals in 1893. He served in that capacity until his death, July 17, 1912.



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## CHAPTER IV

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Mrs. James does not need to go back into antiquity to find illustrious kinsmen. She does not need to go back at all. There is one of her blood who is well known, famed particularly for his exploits in the air. He is very much alive as this is being written, and is earning new laurels.

Lieutenant Commander Thomas Greenhow Williams Settle, United States Navy, is a nephew of Mrs. James. He is the son of Mrs. James' sister, Mrs. Joseph Andrew Settle.

In August, 1937, Admiral Harry E. Yarnell, commanding the Asiatic fleet, wanted a communications officer. He asked for Lieutenant Commander Settle, who was then on duty at Manila. Through the hectic days that followed the young man, who on various occasions made history in the air, has been in a measure the eyes and ears of





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the United States Government in the war zone in China.

How much responsibility was attached to the position may not be known until after the Oriental troubles are cleared up. It is known that the Lieutenant Commander was on board the *Augusta*, flagship of the fleet, when she lay in the midst of the bombing opposite Shanghai, and that he was in more or less constant communication with Washington. It is believed that actions taken by the United States depended somewhat, at least, upon his reports.

The young naval officer was born in Washington, D. C., November 4, 1895, the son of Joseph Andrew Settle and his wife, Mrs. May Williams Settle. His father later became a clerk in the Quartermaster department—he was commissioned during the World War—and was entrusted with important assignments, particularly in the Philippines and in Hawaii. Thus it happened that the youngster received his early education wherever his parents were stationed.

Later his mother returned to her old home in San Antonio (she was born there) and the son graduated from the Main Avenue high school in the Alamo City.

He was appointed to the Naval Academy at Annapolis by President Woodrow Wilson, an unusual procedure because the President





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usually uses his personal appointments for sons of army and navy men. Mr. Settle was a civilian employee at that time.

The young man was graduated with the class of midshipmen who had been crowded through their work to finish the course a year ahead of normal graduation because the country was at war. He was number two in his class of about four hundred and was graduated June 6, 1918.

Following his graduation he went home to Washington, having a month's leave of absence, customarily given graduates. But in a few days he became impatient, feeling his country needed him. Long before his leave expired he reported for duty at Hoboken, N. J., and not long afterward was placed in command of a gun crew on one of the transports carrying American soldiers to Brest, France. Later he saw active service aboard a destroyer.

Although the Naval Academy class of 1919 was graduated in 1918, not a lesson was missed or even abridged, it is stated. Holidays were held to a minimum and the young men were crowded through to finish a year earlier than was normal.

It was not until the young Lieutenant was assigned to the naval air forces that he began to make history. At present it is said he may be the only man in the world fully qualified





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to handle every type of air ship, including heavier than air craft of all types, dirigibles both large and small, balloons and gliders.

He has been remarkably successful in balloon races. Besides winning in this country he made international history by winning a race that started in Switzerland. He landed finally in Poland. The race won him the Gordon Bennett cup.

It is within the memory of most Americans when he set a new stratosphere record and for hours was believed lost in making the descent from the great height reached. The last report of his ship was that it was floating toward the Atlantic and probably could not be landed in time to save it from falling in the ocean.

However, the young officer landed it in a swamp, about fifteen miles from the sea, late at night in the darkness, without damage to himself, his companion, or to his ship and instruments.

He and Major Fordney, who accompanied him, wrapped themselves in folds of their deflated gas bag and slept the rest of the night. It was nearly noon the next day before communication was established with the outside world.

What it feels like to be the mother of a lost stratosphere flier, Mrs. Settle knows.

"I didn't even think about going to bed



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that night," she said. "Although the last report of my son's ship was that it was heading out over the Atlantic, I never really believed he was lost. I felt he knew too well what he was doing.

"I was sure, if he was safe, he would let me know as soon as possible. So I stayed close to my telephone and waited. A friend stayed with me.

"Late at night a bellboy brought me all of the early morning papers. There was nothing in them except the same report, that he was drifting out to sea. All the later editions carried the same thing.

"We went downstairs early in the morning and drank some coffee. I didn't try to eat anything. I didn't feel hungry.

"Early in the morning a swarm of newspaper men came up to my apartment and stayed. They sat on my bed, occupied all the chairs, and those who couldn't find seats anywhere else sat on the floor in the hallway leading to my rooms. Every time the telephone rang they would rush in to see if it meant there was news from my son."

It was a trying time for Mrs. James also. The young officer is her only living nephew. He is almost as dear to her as her son.

There was another time when the immediate family and friends of Lieutenant Settle were badly frightened. He was navigation





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officer aboard the Shenandoah, had been for some time. It was expected he would be aboard her when she started on her last tragic voyage. Almost at the last moment before she sailed he was temporarily transferred to the command of a smaller craft. The Shenandoah flew away without him.

Friends of the family in Washington were almost paralyzed the next morning when news of the crash of the big airship reached the capital. All believed the young Lieutenant had been on board and therefore felt sure he was among the victims. They tried to keep the newspapers away from the mother, but she insisted on seeing them.

However, Mrs. Settle had a letter from her son that morning in which he told her he was not making the flight. There was enough of doubt that fear was not entirely removed until a message could be sent through to the son and a reply returned.

Noteworthy among the exploits of the expert airman was one for which there was no preparation, and which showed his coolness and daring and his ability to make quick judgments and act upon them.

It was at Chicago at the World's Fair. He was to make a balloon ascension as a feature. Thousands were gathered to witness the flight. In making a final check of his ship before taking off the flier found his bag was





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leaking. It was filled with dangerous, highly explosive hydrogen gas. The leak had to be stopped.

A repairman was called and went to work at it. For some reason he was unable to stop the leak. Instead it grew worse. Men were smoking not a great distance from the huge hydrogen-filled bag. If the concentration of the gas in the air became sufficiently dense, the flare of a match, even the burning tip of a cigar or cigarette, would ignite the escaping gas. A resultant explosion of the bag would be inevitable. The results on the great crowd were unthinkable.

Lieutenant Settle did not hesitate. He gave orders to have the ship released and stepped into the gondola. He went aloft to about five thousand feet where, clear of the crowds and danger to them, he began deflating the balloon. He succeeded in landing, without injury to himself or his ship, in the railroad yards in Chicago, considered little short of a miracle.

There is no doubt the flier understood perfectly the danger to himself in taking a leaking ship into the air. That danger was so evident to other officials that hardly had he left the ground before they sent for his wife, who was in Maryland. There were so many things could happen to that leaking





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bag that would mean swift disaster to the flier.

He didn't fall. He managed to avoid the tall buildings in making his descent to land safely. He had calmly taken a hideous menace away from a multitude of people, rid himself of part of the menace at least, and then skillfully returned to the ground.

Even then he had trouble with crowds who insisted upon rushing too close to the leaking, still partly inflated bag. It was there that his friendship for Major Fordney began. It was Major Fordney who came to his rescue and helped fight off the curious until a sufficient force of officers could be brought to the scene to keep them at a distance. Not until the bag was completely deflated would danger end.

A good deal of Lieutenant Commander Settle's work has been experimental. The famous flight into the stratosphere was in this category. Numerous balloon ascensions and balloon races were made for similar purposes.

Perhaps some of his most spectacular experiments, from the layman's point of view at least, have been with gliders. Releasing a glider suspended beneath the huge Los Angeles, for example, at an altitude of five thousand feet—about a mile in the air—and riding it safely to a landing on the earth, has





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many elements of the spectacular. The noted airman has done that.

Personally he is quiet, reserved, good natured, a favorite with his men and his brother officers. He stands almost exactly six feet in height, is broad in his shoulders and narrow across the hips, a perfect specimen of manhood. His smile is ready and warm. His voice is low and even.

He has a keen sense of duty and a remarkable ability, using a slang expression, to "keep his mouth shut."

An illustration of the last mentioned trait is given by his mother. He was in Akron, Ohio, during the building of the ill-fated Akron. Often he would be called to Washington by President Coolidge to supply the executive with information or advice. His mother lived in Washington and knowing he was traveling about a good deal never was particularly surprised to see him toward the end of any day.

"Although I was acquainted with President and Mrs. Coolidge and went to the White House quite often," Mrs. Settle said, "and of course saw my son every time he was in the capital, it was long after Mr. Coolidge had retired to Northampton that I knew my son had been seeing him. Even then it was not until Mr. Coolidge himself, talking to newsmen, told of how he had de-





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pended on my son for information, that I knew anything about it. The boy himself never mentioned his visits to the White House even to me, his mother."

Perhaps it is his ability to keep information to himself for delivery only to constituted authority which gave him his berth in the war zone in China. That and, of course, his keen intelligence and ability to see through a problem with quick, sure eyes.

Mrs. James does not need to go back to find an illustrious kinsman. In fact she may go forward, to a newer generation, to find one who is hardly yet in his prime, and already has a great record of achievement behind him.



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## CHAPTER V

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"My father was a first lieutenant and was stationed in San Antonio at the same time that General Robert E. Lee (he was Lieutenant Colonel Lee at that time) was on duty here," says Mrs. James.

"During the days shortly before the war General Lee and my father often talked of the coming events that were casting their shadows before them. They discussed what they would do in the event that Virginia, the native state of them both, should secede. They both decided they could not remain in the service if that happened, and at the last both did as they planned when Virginia, the last state to withdraw from the Union, took that step.

"They both resigned and both reported for duty in Richmond. General Lee before that had been asked to become commander-in-chief of the northern forces, but refused."

Mrs. James was a tiny tot at that time,





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not yet eighteen months old. She has, of course, no memory of the hectic days in Texas which followed the election of Abraham Lincoln in November, 1860, although she was in San Antonio at the time.

In February, 1861, General Lee, having been ordered to report to General Scott in Washington, reached San Antonio from his station at Fort Mason just in time to miss the seizure by Texans of the United States government stores and other Federal property in the city, and the surrender of all Federal forts and forces in the state. The action was precipitated, history relates, because of an order relieving General Twiggs from command of the Texas department and the appointment of Colonel C. A. Waite, a New Yorker, in his place. Confederate sympathizers feared Colonel Waite would be a hard man with whom to deal. The surrender occurred on February 16, 1861.

Douglas Southall Freeman, in his *R. E. Lee*, gives an account of the arrival of that officer at San Antonio en route to Washington.

"The first intimation that Lee had of any of this (relief of General Twiggs and surrender of Federal garrisons and property) was when his ambulance drew up in front of the Read House in San Antonio about 2 o'clock that afternoon. Immediately the



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vehicle was surrounded by a crowd of curious men, on whose coats or shirts Lee observed a crude red insignia. Soon he saw Mrs. Caroline Darrow, the wife of a friend coming across the square to meet him.

“ ‘Who are these men?’ he asked as soon as he had greeted her.

“ ‘They are McCulloch’s,’ she answered. ‘General Twiggs surrendered everything to the state this morning, and we are all prisoners of war.’

“The shock of her announcement upset Lee’s poise for a moment. Tears came into his eyes. His lips trembled in spite of him. ‘Has it come so soon as this?’ he asked.

“Prisoners of war! \* \* \* \* To determine the precise state of affairs he took off his uniform, put on civilian clothes, and went across to headquarters. There he found the secessionists in complete control. The authority of the United States was at an end.”

However, Lee was permitted to leave Texas and go to Washington. So was Lieutenant Williams who left his little family behind him for the time. His wife and small children followed him to Richmond later after he had been appointed on the General Staff of the Confederacy there, and remained in the Southern capital until after the close of the war—until the railroads which had been destroyed during the final battles, es-





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pecially in the vicinity of Richmond, had been rebuilt and reasonably secure means of travel opened up again.

Mrs. James' memory, naturally, does not reach back to include the early days of the war. She was only five and a half years old when General Lee surrendered, which was practically the end of the conflict. But there are many things about the closing days of the struggle which are etched sharply on her memory, many incidents which still remain clear to her.

"Colonel John Withers of Alabama was a very close friend of my father," Mrs. James says. "He was a classmate, the young men having graduated from West Point together in 1849.

"At the outbreak of the war Colonel Withers also resigned from United States' service and joined the Confederacy. He was appointed Adjutant General and was stationed at Richmond. My father was assigned to the position of Assistant Commissary General with the rank of Colonel and also was stationed at Richmond.

"We joined my father at Richmond and it was during those years of close association with the Withers family, the years of the war, that a bond of friendship grew up that has only gained in strength through the following years.



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"As a little girl there were many tragic events of those days in Richmond that I still remember. There were also many pleasant incidents which I not only remember, but cherish.

"The favorite pastime of a number of little folks at one time was to sit on the front steps while the Yankee troops passed with much clanking of swords. We were singing,

" 'Wrap me up in a Rebel flag and lay me by  
Jeff Davis;

" 'Give my love to General Lee and kiss the  
rebel ladies.'

"Although we must have been in great danger, I do not remember being at all afraid.

"My father was away from home much of the time in connection with his duties leaving my mother and the little children, one a baby in arms, alone in the house. Mrs. Withers was also often alone with her family. Although my mother and Mrs. Withers must have had many anxious moments, there was no actual fear until it became known that Richmond would be evacuated.

"But General Ord, who was one of the commanders at Richmond, had married a Virginia lady and he took particular pains to send soldiers to guard the homes of the of-





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ficers of President Davis' staff. I can remember yet the soldiers walking back and forth in front of our home in a very imposing manner with guns flashing."

It is small wonder that the little girl remembers the fright on the part of the people of Richmond during the first few days of April, 1865. When, on the withdrawal of General Lee from Petersburg, it became necessary to evacuate the capital, the Confederate Congress ordered the destruction by burning of warehouses containing cotton, tobacco and other property lest it fall into the hands of the Federals.

Humane General Richard Stoddard Ewell, in command at Richmond, protested vehemently, pointing out that firing the warehouses would threaten the city. But the War Department would not listen, so there was nothing to do but set fire to the buildings.

To prevent drunkenness among stragglers and others on the withdrawal of the organized troops it was ordered that a large amount of liquors also be destroyed. Hundreds of casks were opened and dumped into the gutters. But enough of it was salvaged to accomplish what it had been planned to avoid. Stragglers and the rough element of both sexes promptly dipped it out of the





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that adverse criticism on the death of the President would bring the death penalty.

"When the marauding soldiers swept through Richmond one woman we knew hid her silver in a pot of boiling ham to save it. We never knew where she got the ham. It was very scarce. In fact everything was hard to get. We used ground up potatoes in place of coffee.

"Other people threw their silver into the James River hoping that later they would be able to find it.

"All of Richmond seemed to be in flames. My father was out of the city when Richmond was evacuated. But they caught President Davis and put him in solitary confinement at Fort Monroe. He was in one of the casements of the old fortress at Old Point Comfort, under continued surveillance. It seems to me that is the most cruel thing that could be done to a person. I was told he escaped in woman's attire. Of this I am not sure.

"We were in great terror at our home on Cary Street. There was the constant booming of cannon. Through the smoke the contents of many stores were being poured out into the street. In some places flour was up to one's ankles, and flour was at such a premium. A cannon ball came almost directly to our house, but stopped between





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our home and the next one. It went over the head of a Mr. Royster who lived next door.

"General Lee had his own headquarters in Richmond and the house where he lived is now marked with a tablet of bronze. General Lee is my kinsman through the Childs family.

"One of my kinsmen, Captain John B. Munford of the artillery, who was in charge of the cannonading, died of concussion. He was brought to my Aunt Maria Curtis. I remember the blinds of her home were closed.

"It was a desperate time for mothers. Many of the ladies of Richmond devoted their time to nursing men who had been wounded in the fighting. My mother could not do this as my brother, Tyler, was a baby in arms.

"I remember one incident while we lived in Richmond which made a big impression on my childish mind. It was on my fourth birthday and my Aunt Anne Munford asked me to take Sunday dinner with her. She lived quite near so my mother let me go. Dressed in my prettiest white dress with a new sash (I always felt my best in a sash) and my nicest hat I went to her house. When I arrived I was told by the maid that Mrs. Munford had sent word she would not be





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home for dinner. She was taking dinner with Mrs. Stark. It was to Mrs. Stark's home that my grandfather was taken from Puccoon, and it was there he died.

"Many years afterward when I told Aunt Anne about that birthday dinner she was overwhelmed. She had forgotten all about it. I remember walking home through the rustling leaves that a whirling October wind had piled against the fence. I was so grief-stricken I would not take the sidewalk. Truly, for me just then, 'The melancholy days were come, the saddest of the year.'

"During my stay in Richmond as a little girl our family physician was Doctor Bolton. He drove a gray horse to a buggy. He had to come often to our place to attend the children with the croup or chicken pox. He was my father's and my mother's friend as well as physician.

"Mother used to say that my sister May and I were very croupy children. The dear Doctor would pause at the door to listen, then if he heard a noise that sounded like sickness he would come up the steps two or three at a time. He was with my mother when Thomas Greenhow and Tyler Curtis, my two little brothers, were born. He was with the little boys when my brother Curtis died of diphtheria and Thomas Greenhow died of membranous croup. Both of these





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dear little brothers are buried in the beautiful Hollywood cemetery in Richmond.

"Often my mother in her grief would take us to Hollywood where she would sit stricken beside their graves while we children played about, gathering buttercups and other beautiful Virginia flowers.

"There was a holly tree in the section where the Williams lot was located, with a hollow in it large enough for us children to put our hands in it. There always was water in this hollow place and it was cool and pleasant to touch. My sister Fanny cut her initials, F. W., in the bark of that tree and put under them the year, 1863. In the years that followed, on my visits to Richmond, I always tried to go to those graves. While there I would dabble my fingers in the water, and see my sister's initials.

"Doctor Bolton was well beloved by all who knew him. He had called at our house so often the horse knew the place. On days when the Doctor was in deep study often the horse would stop in front of our home, or that of somebody else where the physician did not at all intend to pay a visit."

But the little girl did not remember other terror-stricken times in Richmond when the Federal forces seemed to be knocking at the very gates of the city. She did not remember when her mother's ancestral home be-



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came itself a battle ground, the old plantation ravished by fighting. It was not until years later when, as a young woman, she revisited Richmond, that she heard the story of the earlier days and saw the evidences of the terrible struggles that had swept the old place, marks of which still could be seen. But hearing the story of those battles from the lips of those who had been present at the time, and remembering that she herself had been in Richmond when they were fought, although too young to remember, they became part of her souvenirs.

Her memory is greatly aided by having visited the old battlefields where fortifications still could be seen about seventeen years after the struggling forces of blue and gray had made history there.





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## CHAPTER VI

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“As a young girl I went back to Richmond to visit our relations,” says Mrs. James. “I remember we went to visit my Uncle Armstead Curtis at Puccoon and he took us to see the great battlefields where some of the fortifications still were standing.

“Puccoon, the home of my grandfather, Doctor Henry Curtis, is twelve miles southeast of Richmond. It was a center around which many battles were fought. The house itself was at one time the headquarters for Federal General George B. McClellan. Included in the engagements over and around Puccoon were those known as the battle of Gaines’ Mill, Edmundson’s Mill, the battle of Seven Pines, of Cold Harbor and the great battle of Chickahominy Swamp.”

Those battles were fought shortly after General Lee was given command of the Army of Northern Virginia in June, 1862. General Johnston, in command of the forces



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opposing the invaders under General McClellan, was wounded in the battle of Seven Pines (Fair Oaks) and had to be relieved of his command. President Davis immediately appointed General Lee to the vacancy in the midst of the battle, a command which he held until the surrender at Appomattox on April 9, 1865.

Most of the fighting around Puccoon occurred when the Confederates were driving McClellan back, away from Richmond. It was during the battle of Gaines' Mill that Doctor Curtis lay desperately ill at his plantation home. Members of his family and friends moved the sick man while bullets screeched across his fields, to the Stark home in Richmond.

There was still fighting around the homestead a few days later when, Doctor Curtis having died, he was taken back to be buried in the cemetery near his home. It was shortly after the physician was removed to Richmond that General McClellan opened his headquarters in the house. He was there, however, a comparatively short time before General Lee succeeded in driving him farther away from the Confederate capital.

Meanwhile the building had been used as a temporary resting place for the wounded and dying. Its floors were soaked with blood. Its walls were pierced over and over





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again with bullets. But it stood sturdily, having been very substantially built early in the seventeenth century.

Although the scars made by bullets still were visible and the bloodstains had not been entirely removed from its floors, it still was standing the last time Mrs. James saw it, although it passed some time ago out of the hands of the descendants of Doctor Curtis.

Mrs. James visited her Uncle Armstead Curtis on her first return visit to Richmond in 1880.

"When I went out to Puccoon for a visit the summer I spent in Richmond," Mrs. James remembers, "my cousins Willie and Cora Wells took me out in what was known then as a Hanover Hack. This was little more than a small carriage with two wheels and a white canvas cover over the boards, and no springs. My cousin Willie sat on a board in front to drive and Cora and I sat on the bottom at the back on plenty of comfortable hay. The road was what they called a corduroy road. It was made by laying small pine poles close together crossways of the road, and was very rough.

"It led out by the battlefields of Seven Pines, Chickahominy Swamp, Cold Harbor and Gaines' Mill. We could still see the bullet-pierced pine trees, and the breastworks





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of those famous battles were still standing. Puccoon was certainly in the hot bed of the fighting.

"My cousin drove very fast, on purpose I think, and when I reached Puccoon I had a desperate headache from the jolting and was unable to partake of the splendid dinner in my honor.

"My Uncle Armstead, when he saw I could not eat, said, 'My dear Maria, I'm afraid you made a mistake in visiting your rich kin before you came here to visit your poor kin.'

"The remark hurt me. But before I left I reassured him with my splendid appetite, and nearly ate him out of house and home.

"Such fine times we had in Puccoon that summer, visiting the neighboring water-melon patches and going to dances and parties. We danced the square dance and sang as we danced, 'Skip to my Lou, My Darling.' This, I suppose, was more of a quadrille which we all enjoyed immensely. It was always such fun.

"At parties we played 'Clap in, Clap out,' 'Heavy, Heavy Hangs Over Your Head,' 'Scandal,' and another in which we wrote on a piece of paper and passed it all around to be read. This one was called 'Secrets.'

"Young girls in those days were never permitted to go buggy-riding nor to sit on a





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sofa with a gentleman. My father said if a gentleman took a seat on the sofa, I was to take a seat on a chair. We never went out alone. When we went to parties a group of young people would come by in a carriage and get us and all would go together.

"At Puccoon we danced in the very room where my mother and father had been married.

"After the war the old family homestead, Puccoon, was all that was left to Doctor Curtis' family. My grandfather and my father, in company with so many other Virginians, changed their gold into Confederate bonds. Grandfather gave each of his children \$10,000 in such bonds. Of course, after the war, they were worthless. So everyone who had invested in them lost their wealth.

"My mother sold her interest in the homestead before she returned to Texas after the war. I remember she made a coin belt and strapped it around her waist and carried her money in it to make the trip to Texas.

"We were in Virginia five years during and after the war. We had to wait in Richmond until the railroads in Virginia, which were destroyed during the fighting, had been rebuilt before starting back to San Antonio."

Mrs. James thinks they traveled by rail





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from Richmond to New Orleans, thence by ship to Indianola. From there she clearly remembers the trip in an ambulance to San Antonio.

"My family," recalls Mrs. James in connection with her first visit back to Richmond, "has always contended that I am not a pioneer woman, even though I was born in Texas during the pioneer days. I suppose I might be called a Texas-born Virginian."

"I was twenty years old when I went on my first visit to my relatives in Virginia. They were concerned about my manners and etiquette, having been reared in Texas. They were afraid I would be crude and impolite. One of my dear aunts told me afterward that she would have preferred for me never to have come to Virginia if I had not measured up to what she expected of me.

"But it seems that I made good, for instead of staying one month in Richmond as I had expected, I stayed almost a year. The memory of those days are hallowed, for I was fortunate in finding almost everything unchanged, the elegant manner of living, even the old servants. One butler had been in the family for forty-five years.

"When I arrived in Richmond from Lynchburg where I had been visiting, my sister, Mrs. Gresham, my uncle and cousin met me at the depot. My uncle came into





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the train to where I sat, a timid young girl. When he passed down the aisle I felt instinctively that he was my uncle, Samuel C. Greenhow. I rose as he was passing the seat and put my hand on his arm and asked, 'Are you my Uncle Sam Greenhow?' He said, 'Are you little Maria?'

"They called me the Texas flower. I was dreadfully timid, so my uncle took charge of me. At the foot of the steps Cousin Sallie Greenhow waited for me. She was like an angel to me always. To the last day of her life her devotion was one of the most exquisite things in my life.

"When we reached the old home I was handed from one embrace to another. That night when I went down to supper I had changed to a little white muslin dress and went in the dining room on my uncle's arm. Oh, such a dining room! It was paneled from floor to ceiling. There was a beautiful old sideboard full of rare old glass and china. Lovely cups of lavender china with gold bands. The polished mahogany table was laid with crocheted mats and there was a rare silver basket holding the beaten biscuits. Often we had five kinds of bread on the table. Besides the beaten biscuits there would be risen biscuits, batter bread, hot loaf bread and rolls and corn pone with the



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print of four fingers on top of each and perhaps a little ashes clinging to the sides.

"Samuel C. Greenhow was my great uncle but my father always called him Brother Sam. He never addressed him as uncle, they were so nearly the same age.

"On my arrival Cousin Sallie Greenhow said, 'Maria, this is your home!' And it was my headquarters for the entire year I was in Virginia. I visited many places, but always I would go back to Cousin Sallie's to stay.

"They had a huge estate. The grounds were so large that when the house was torn down years later, four modern city homes were built on the grounds. Their home was built during the early Colonial days. When it was torn down the foundations were still in excellent condition. It was located on Tenth Street, then the court end of Richmond.

"My grandmother's home also was in the court end. It was terraced up from the street for about five feet and there was a hedge, or stone terrace, above that for about six feet.

"Uncle Sam's was a brick house but was boarded outside. Its walls were very thick. It was two stories high with an attic and cellar. It was filled with old antiques, Colonial furniture from both sides that had been in the family for generations.





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“The entrance was a short porch with pillars leading down to the beautiful grounds and flower beds. There one entered into a hall with windows on one side overlooking the grounds. There were comfortable chairs where we often sat in the summer. Especially there was Uncle Sam’s big chair. It was put out on the south porch. When he returned from a walk with Cousin Sallie he would take his seat and one of his daughters always was ready to cool his face and hands with ice water scented with lavender. Then they would draw their chairs as close to him as they could so they could talk to him and hear him without inconvenience.

“With my Cousin Sallie often I would sit on the steps leading down to the garden on summer evenings. A kind lady in Lynchburg heard I could sing and play the guitar so she loaned me one that was very beautiful, inlaid with mother-of-pearl. It was sent to me at Richmond. So often I would sit and play and sing the dear familiar songs of my home in Texas—‘The Cottage by the Sea,’ ‘Santa Lucia,’ ‘Pirates’ Serenade,’ and ‘Sister Mary’. The last one had at least a dozen verses.

“The first room beyond the hall was a very large parlor. It was square with open grates. There was a mantelpiece holding





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rare bric-a-brac, and various oil paintings. One of the pictures was of my father's aunt, Anne Greenhow Williams, holding in her arms her baby, Sallie, my father's first double cousin. There was my great grandmother Greenhow, who was considered almost sanctified. When my father was a little boy and anything frightened him, he never stopped until he found himself in Grandmother's arms, his head burrowed in her lap.

"The furniture in the parlor included Chippendale chairs and sofa. There were old cabinets, square with glass sides through which I gazed at rare family treasures and shells from distant countries. There were unusual shells from China and others beautifully coral-shaped from India. I have a pair of rare blue China vases, inherited from my grandmother, which were given to her by her second husband, Major Nelson. He brought them from China himself and they are more than a hundred years old.

"The family photograph album was on the center table and beautiful hand-made tidies were on the chairs. The table was Chippendale. It was years later before I learned fully to appreciate the beauty and value of all this lovely furniture. Coming from Texas my knowledge of chairs was limited to the hickory variety with rawhide





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bottoms, turned out so expertly by our leading San Antonio chair maker, Mr. Rose.

"There was a body Brussels carpet covering the entire floor. Filmy lace curtains were caught back on a lovely gilt holder at each side. The outside of the house was white with green blinds.

"The dining room was paneled. The mahogany table was so broad I felt I could just see across it. I could see my reflection in it, so highly was it polished. Exquisite crocheted mats in dainty lace patterns were arranged over the surface on which to set glasses, dishes and the like. In the center was a larger lacy mat.

"The teaspoons were all worn. They were hand made from coin silver and were very thin. The name of the silversmith was on the back of each. Two oblong silver baskets with handles on them served as receptacles for biscuits, cakes or slices of Smithfield ham, so thin they curled over the knife while being cut.

"The sideboard was magnificent. It had four doors of carved mahogany set with diamond-shaped panes of glass through which one could see the lovely china and the wine service of silver and cut glass decanters. High-backed chairs, hand carved, were fitted with red velvet cushions. The dining service was superintended by a col-





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ored Mammy who had nursed three generations in the family. She did not wait on the table, but stood to one side keeping her eyes on the younger maid to see that the service was perfect. She kept those eagle eyes on every move the younger woman made.

"My Uncle Sam always asked the blessing in the same way. He said, 'Lord, make us thankful for these and all Thy blessings for Jesus' sake. Amen.' He was a very religious man. No Sunday edition of a newspaper ever was opened or read in his house. He was senior warden for years in the St. James Episcopal Church. That was where he was married. St. James was pulled down after that, was built miles away in the northern part of Richmond.

"In the kitchen a Charter Oak stove had taken the place of the fireplaces they used to use. Aunt Caroline, the cook, had been with the Greenhow family for nearly thirty years. She was a law unto herself in that kitchen.

"They used open fireplaces where coal was burned in the grates. In other parts of the house they used Latrobe heaters, a new invention, with hot air vents leading to the rooms above. They were quite ornamental, being round and having a multitude of little isinglass windows through which the fire could be seen, radiating comfort and cheer.





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"There were no springs for beds in those days. Ropes were laced across and caught over hook-shaped pegs. On this then was placed a wool mattress and then the feather bed with a slit in the outer ticking to slip the hand in to regulate the spread of the feathers to any part of the mattress.

"The washing of fine china and glass was never trusted to the servants but was done by the lady of the house herself. Pans of hot water were brought in from the kitchen and with fine soap and a mop the washing was done. I can see my aunt now, holding the handle of a delicate cup while she washed it and, while it was still hot, one of the daughters dried it quickly with a fine linen tea towel. This china never was permitted to leave the dining room or the butler's pantry.

"One of the events of the morning was when the cook would come in with containers and my aunt would unlock the pantry, and rations for the day, flour, lard, sugar, etc., would be measured out and given to Aunt Caroline. The lady of the house always had a basket which she called the key basket, where the keys were kept. It was carried upstairs every night and deposited in my aunt's room.

"My Aunt Maria sent me as a wedding present two housekeeping aprons made of



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calico with pockets, beautifully embroidered, to wear around my waist. The wearing of one made me feel very distinguished. She also sent me a little key basket, but I am sorry to say my keys were never kept in it as I never locked anything from Aunt Charity.

"A book of fine recipes was given me by my sister, Fanny. On the inside cover she wrote:

" 'If all the cooks don't please you,  
Nor the way some people do,  
Do you think the whole Creation  
Should be altered, just for you?'

"It was written in my sister's hand. It contained recipes for Aunt Mary Wyatt's pound cake, Cousin Sallie's cherry pie and blackberry rolls, and one for beaten biscuits which I could make to perfection with Aunt Charity's help.

"In those days there was very little canned food to be bought. We made our own catsup, stuffed mangoes which we put up in pure olive oil. We made sweet pickled peaches that made the mouth water. Our brandied peaches were put up in 3X brandy.

"My first efforts at housekeeping met with the hearty approval of my husband and father. My precious father came to see me every day, if only for a few minutes. Many times he would stop at the door and say, 'I haven't time to come in this morning, but





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I wanted to drop by and see how you are.' He always took dinner with us Sundays. So proud of me he was! Members of the family have told me later I was his favorite child. Of course, of that, I would not know as he loved us all devotedly.

"On my first visit to Richmond tables often were set out in the evenings for euchre. Sometimes there were only two, just for the family. At other times there were more for the entertainment of guests.

"My Uncle Robert Maury, a prominent banker of Richmond, was a brother of Commodore Maury, famous in connection with the laying of the first trans-Atlantic cable. His monument stands on Monumental Avenue in Richmond and was unveiled while I was there, members of the Maury family occupying the reserved seats. My cousin, Dean Maury, told us about his uncle's experiments in connection with the cable.

"There is a marble slab on the house occupied then by my great aunt, Mrs. Martha Greenhow Maury, wife of the banker, commemorating the event of the cable. It was in that house where Commodore Maury conducted his first experiments. I occupied the room where those experiments were made although I did not know it until afterward. It contained a very comfortable bed and adjoined the room of my cousins, Bell and Puss



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Maury. The house was noted for its elegant furnishings and hospitality. The same butler had been on duty there for forty years when I visited them, and remained a number of years more.

"I took my first and only sleigh ride on that visit to Richmond. That was in 1880. It was a beau who came all the way from Texas to see me who took me sleighing. It was very expensive, costing five dollars an hour. We stayed out several hours, riding up and down the street with the bells jingling. There was a handsome laprobe and a hot brick at our feet to keep us warm. We had a beautiful team, the high collars strung with bells.

"My beau sent me a sack of fine pecans from Texas as a Christmas present. They were distributed to members of my cousin's family and were considered a great treat. When they were being poured out a beautiful rosary with a medal at the end instead of a cross, was found among the nuts. I kept it for more than fifty years. Just the other day I presented it to my niece, Mrs. Caroline Gresham Cassin. It must have dropped from the pocket or belt of someone who had been gathering the pecans.

"In the fall of 1880 while I was visiting at Aunt Martha Maury's it was decided I should spent the winter in Richmond. So





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of course I needed a very good winter dress and accessories.

"My mother had sent me the large sum of ten dollars for my winter clothes. This was considered a very large amount for a Texas girl whose family was even comfortably well off.

"On the day my money arrived from Texas my Aunt Martha and Cousin Annie said they would help me select the material for my dress. They suggested, however, that they would go ahead to the Miller and Rhodes store and await me there.

"I was considerably impressed with the idea of being able to shop in such a place, for it is, indeed, a magnificent store. The gentlemen clerks wore morning and afternoon dress—light gray trousers—and the clerks behind the counters were cultured ladies. In most instances they were women from fine families who had met reverses and were forced to seek employment.

"Women in those days did not seek employment, as many claim they do today, for the sake of self expression. This thing of a woman neglecting her home, husband and children merely for the sake of letting her soul out on a kite string to soar around, may meet with the approval of some people, but it emphatically does not with mine. Nothing is accomplished. They come out of it the





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same restless, fly-by-night creatures they were before. Their efforts may have afforded them a degree of self expression, but more than likely they have, by their efforts, deprived some trained worker of much needed employment. I have no patience with it.

"But I was talking about buying my winter outfit, wasn't I. As I said, Aunt Martha and Cousin Annie went ahead to look over the materials. I was to meet them at the store at eleven o'clock.

"When I arrived I found the counter piled high with bolts of beautiful dress materials. When I joined them Aunt Martha said, 'Maria, I think we have found what you would like.'

"They showed me a bolt of exquisite maroon material. At the time I thought it was remarkably reasonable and rejoiced that it was well within my ability to buy. I agreed with them perfectly that it was just what I wanted. The material was measured off and matching silk thread to sew it was selected.

"Not only did I have enough money, but I had some left to buy many more things. So guileless was I that I never suspected until years later that I was allowed to spend only a small percentage of the cost of that expensive material. And that only to make me feel at ease.





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"To go with this costume my Aunt Maria felt that she would not need a new pair of gloves that winter as her old gloves were plenty nice enough. She gave me a new pair, of Foster kid at that. The glove of all gloves at that time!

"As for my new winter jacket, my cousin had material already on hand, so she said, and she felt sure I would like it. It was light gray and was faced with cherry satin, with elegant buttons. The dressmaker was already in the house, so I was informed, and there would be no extra expense or trouble to have it made up.

"My new hat to go with this was a toque effect of black velvet, the material for which my aunt already had in the house. It had a crimson breast of feather on it that was most becoming. To go with this my Aunt Anne gave me a pair of shoes for which she refused to let me pay a single penny.

"Then for Christmas I was given a very lovely prayer book and hymnal with my name, 'Maria A. Williams,' in letters of gold. So you see, I was fitted out from head to toe in a very grand manner. On account of the tact, kindness and magnificent deference of these generous women to the sensitiveness of a very poor Texas girl, I believed for years that my ten dollars





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had accomplished the miracle for which it was sent—the purchase of a complete winter wardrobe!

“I learned much, too, about values in the purchase of that wardrobe under the eyes of those discriminating women. My grandmother told me again and again, ‘My daughter, if you can afford only one dress, have it of the nicest material that money can buy. One dress of splendid fabric is worth several of inferior quality.’

“All through my life and that of my daughters stress has been laid on materials. I am surprised to see at the present time that really cultured people lay very little stress on quality. They strive more for a certain effect in style, it seems to me, which is a pity. One might as well try to make ‘a silk purse out of a sow’s ear’ as a fine dress from shabby cloth.

“It is in keeping with much that is the modern spirit—to put on a show at all costs. It is in keeping too with much that sprang up in this country during the pre-depression days when it seemed the entire nation lost its head and began to live by spurious values.

“All too much emphasis was given to the artificial things of life. Money grabbing became the order of the day. God was forgotten and character seemed to go to





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pieces. Then the depression hit us and brought us back to our knees again—and to sanity, let us hope!”

Thus the little Texan during her stay in the Old Dominion not only enjoyed herself and saw much of interest, but she was learning wisdom as well.

She saw many places of interest, but there was one more in particular that interested her greatly on a later visit. It is at Hampton.

Mrs. James urges anyone who visits Virginia to go to Hampton and see the little Episcopal church there.

“It is built in the shape of a Maltese cross,” she says. “One enters near the chancel and not in the usual way at the end of the building.

“Near the door, as one enters by the chancel rails, and to the right there is a beautiful stained glass window given by England in memory of the baptism of Pocahontas.

“When I was there we were shown the communion service of solid hand-wrought silver, exposed to view through the plate glass sides of the safe in which it was kept.

“Outside the magnolias were in full bloom. The old colored janitor made my daughter and myself each a present of a blossom.”



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## CHAPTER VII

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Because it awakened so many childhood memories and so many members of her family had been involved, the visit to the old battlefields around Richmond was a high spot in the stay of the "little flower" of Texas at the former Confederate capital.

She saw the battlefield at Seven Pines, also known as Fair Oaks, where, on the morning of June 1, 1862, in the midst of the fighting, General Lee took command of the Confederate army, due to the wounding of General Johnston, who had been in command.

She saw the village of Mechanicsville where, in the attempt to capture Richmond, the Federals were closest to the Confederate capital, only four and a half miles away, and from which position the enemy was driven by a general attack on June 26, the beginning of the Seven Days of Fighting. She visited Beaver Dam Creek where the





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Federals stubbornly resisted the attack and held their ground when night fell over that first day's battle.

She saw the field at Gaines' Mill, the scene of the second day's encounter. It was while this fierce battle was in progress, and bullets were whistling across the fertile acres of her grandfather's home at Puccoon that the sick Doctor Curtis was removed to safety in Richmond. Puccoon had borne the brunt of part of the battle, had witnessed the ebb and flow of the combatant lines, its plantation house had been marred by bullets of friend and foe alike.

She was shown where, in Boatswain's Swamp, General John B. Hood and his Texans had been ordered to strike to relieve pressure at other points on the Confederate front, and where they achieved immortal glory in a charge against "impossible" odds.

In his *R. E. Lee*, Douglas Southall Freeman says of that encounter, "It was a drama that gave Hood's Texans a place in his (Lee's) heart that no other command ever won."

It was seventeen years after savagely battling men had fought and died in the woods and swamps southeast of Richmond but there were yet many reminders of the former days. Portions of fortifications remained standing, earthworks behind which men in



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blue sought to stem the tide of the Confederate advance, and against whom the strength and flower of the Confederacy was thrown.

"Puccoon, the birthplace of my mother," explains Mrs. James, "is in Hanover County, Virginia, twelve miles southeast of Richmond on a road that passed through the Chickahominy Swamp. This road was constructed by placing small pine saplings side by side as a floor for the roadbed.

"Breastworks used in the great battles fought in that vicinity, when I saw them years after they were used, were overgrown with tall pine trees and wild flowers, though they remained much as they had been. It is no wonder that in the hearts of Virginia people there remains the memory of those battles; there is so much to remind them of it all.

"My grandfather was very low when the battle started and was confined to his bed. During part of the fighting the bullets swept across his bed and entered the wall beyond. One bullet cut the bell rope which he used in ringing for his servant.

"In the last stages of his illness he was moved to Richmond and it was there he died, at the home of dear friends, Mr. and Mrs. Stark. It was from their home his funeral took place. For burial he was moved back





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to Puccoon and was buried there while the battle still was raging.

"After my grandfather was moved to Richmond General McClellan took possession of Puccoon and used it as his headquarters for a time.

"I also visited the scene of the battle of the Yellow Tavern, seven miles from Richmond, and lingered there for many hours, my mind busy with the brilliance and grandeur of that fight. It was there that General 'Jeb' Stuart received his mortal wound. His last order, after he had been wounded, was, 'Open this field.' These words are on his monument.

"There was gallantry and magnificence in that battle because it was fought by men who represented the cream of the blue blood of Virginia.

"I have been told my grandfather really died of a broken heart. He was a brilliant physician and many young men studied under him. I met a practicing physician in the army here, Doctor Powell, who had studied under him.

"Grandfather was the author of several books. He did his writing on a sort of table attached to an arm chair on which also was set at all times his sand box. Doctor Hunter McGuire told me that textbooks of Doctor Henry Curtis are still in use in medi-





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cal schools in Virginia. My grandfather was a graduate of Hampton Sidney Medical College."

The young girl never was to forget that trip with her uncle Armstead Curtis over the ground where McClellan and his army were driven away from Richmond. Later she was to see some of the men who took part in those engagements.

"I happened to be in Richmond," Mrs. James says, "visiting my cousins during the last great Reunion of the Confederate Veterans."

It was a glorious occasion with hospitable Richmond outdoing its own famed hospitality in caring for its honored heroes.

"It was beyond words to describe," Mrs. James says. "Every home was thrown open to them. Tables were set on the lawns and refreshments of all kinds were served whenever there was a halt in the great line of march. At such pauses chairs were hurried to the street so that those who were infirm could rest a little, while lemonade and cake was served all along the line. Everything was free to them.

"I saw one dear veteran, dressed in full uniform, his breast covered with decorations, marching on the arm of his granddaughter.

"One came in high hopes that he might find a picture of General Lee, cut in the





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floor of a building that had been used for a hospital.' The picture, he said, had been beside his cot.

"He was so old and frail it was believed by many that it was a dream, because the Reunion was in 1922, sixty years after he had occupied a hospital cot in Richmond. But dreams, Richmond folk decided, must be realized if possible, particularly by their veterans. So a committee of Richmond gentlemen took him in charge and started to try to find that picture.

"The man had only a shadowy idea of what the building looked like but he insisted he would know it again if he saw it. The search lasted for some time.

"They thought it likely that the building might have been torn down or destroyed, there having been comparatively few of the business structures of 1862 which remained sixty years later.

"The veteran was giving up in despair, too tired and discouraged to go on. He asked his friends to take him back to his hotel and end the search. Suddenly one member of the party remembered an old box factory. An older member recalled that it had been used for a time as an emergency hospital. They drove to it.

"The aged veteran took one look at the exterior and happily decided it was the place.





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They crowded out of their automobiles while the veteran, forgetful of his fatigue, clambered up the steep steps to the second story, his hosts following him.

"He groped about uncertainly only for a moment. Then he led the way to a corner of a large room, through a confusion of dust and litter. He knelt on the floor and began brushing aside shavings and debris.

"It was a tense moment. The others stood over him, unbelieving, glancing at one another with pity in their eyes. Suddenly there was an exclamation from the man on the floor. The others crowded closer.

"Almost as clearly as when it first was cut the face of the beloved General was outlined before them, unmistakably a picture of Robert E. Lee. As amazing as was the memory of the veteran was the fact that the picture, lost for sixty years under dust and debris, had remained.

"It was during the same Reunion that a man came representing his family in what seemed to be an endless search for a missing member of the family, a young boy who was supposed to have been killed during the fighting around Richmond, but of whom there was no record as to where he had been buried. Some member of the family had been present at every reunion, mixing with the veterans, talking to them. But in answer





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to the question, 'Did you ever know——?' there always had been a 'No.'

"Discouraged but never despairing this representative was at Richmond. He was with a group riding over the old battlefields. One man said, 'I fought near here somewhere, and by my side was Mr.——.'

"It was the name they had been searching for, the name of the missing member of the family. It required only a short search for them to locate a tree where he had fallen and under which he lay buried."

While in later years, like that of the Reunion, Mrs. James visited at the homes of her cousins, always in her earlier visits she went to the home of her uncle, Sam Greenhow. They always made her feel so entirely at home.

"My Uncle Sam had seven daughters and one son," Mrs. James explains. "The son, George, made his home in Tallahassee, Florida. The daughters were my cousins, Maria, Mamie, Betty, Sallie, Lula and Hal-lie.

"Maria married the Reverend Mr. Baker, an Episcopal minister. Mamie was engaged for fourteen years but her health precluded marriage. She suffered a fall from a horse when she was sixteen when a plank of a bridge she was crossing gave way. She had to lie flat on her back in bed for eight





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months without even so much as a bolster under her head.

"The famous Doctor Hunter McGuire made his first tremendous success when by means of an operation on her spine she was enabled to walk again. During this long illness Cousin Mamie realized, as much as a girl of sixteen can do, what it meant to be helplessly sick. So she conceived the idea of a home to be known as the Virginia Home for Incurables, which is in existence today. She was its founder and first president. Her portrait hangs in the parlor of the institution, which is located on Broad Street in Richmond.

"It was while she was lying on her back that her busy hands occupied themselves making little paper mats which curled like peach leaves on a hair pin. They were made in sets of three, using three shades of green. She sold twenty-five sets. They were used to place on bureaus under cologne bottles and other receptacles. She received twenty dollars for her work and the money was deposited to the credit of the Home, the beginning of its fund.

"When she made up her mind to start the institution she had no idea where anything that would be needed was coming from. She followed the exhortation contained in Goethe's oft-quoted verse:





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“ ‘Are you in earnest? Seize this very minute; What you can do, or dream you can, begin it; Boldness has genius, power and magic in it. Only engage, and then the mind grows heated; Begin, and then the work will be completed.’ ”

“So she began. A kind friend rented a house for her and in the newspaper was placed a notice that the Virginia Home for Incurables was open and would receive donations of furniture, food and other necessities on a given day. Into that house poured furniture of all kinds, rugs, beds, chairs. Into the pantry went a flood of barrels of flour, sugar, sacks of coffee and other foods. Some of the things were sent in without even a name to tell where they were from.

“The Home opened with ten patients. One of them was a little boy who was placed in a crib somebody had given. He was the sunshine of the house, so sweet he was. It is said that every doctor in Richmond offered his services free for examining and caring for the patients, and everything possible was done to help them and make them comfortable. Doctor McGuire once remarked that ‘Miss Greenhow expected him to do more than God Almighty had done.’ ”

“Cousin Betty married Mr. Robert Maury and was left a widow with three small children when her husband’s tragic death occurred in the fall of the capital. The youngest baby was only six weeks old. Uncle Sam





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had them all moved back to the old home where they grew up. They were romping boys when I made my first visit there. Cousin Betty's room was directly over the dining room and you never heard such romps as those boys had. When the noise was no longer endurable a message would be sent upstairs to 'quell the riot.'

"Cousin Betty was the most beautiful of all my cousins. When I was there Cousin Maury had been dead for fourteen years, but she never laid aside her mourning. One morning she did not appear at breakfast. I asked about her and was told she was in bed for the day. I asked permission to go up and see her, thinking she was sick. Then it was she who told me it was the fifteenth anniversary of her husband's death. Oh, such love and devotion to endure thus through the years! Her young sons were named Greenhow, Richmond and Dean.

"Cousin Lula married Mr. A. Langstaff Johnston, a noted inventor and electrical engineer. His invention was the first electric car to be put into operation in Philadelphia. He was a graduate of the Virginia Military Institute.

"All of the girls were grown before I visited them and most of them were married. Uncle Sam always worried about them. One lived only a short distance down





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the street. He would ask constantly, 'Has anyone seen dear Lula? Poor little thing, way off yonder.'

"Cousin Sallie was wonderful and splendid. She kept her lover waiting for twenty years because she could not leave her mother and father. She felt her responsibility was to them, so she waited all those years.

"Cousin Hallie was the youngest daughter. Both Sallie and Hallie visited me in San Antonio. Sallie came twice. Hallie stayed nearly a year. In those days when people visited they really visited. A short visit of two or three months was considered almost an insult.

"Hallie was tentatively engaged to our cousin, Mr. John Overton Smith, but she did not like the name of Smith very well. She said she never would marry him, that she wouldn't live in the country, and that she would not marry on a rainy day. She did each and every one of those things. It was pouring rain the day she married, and she went with her husband to live away out in the country. She would be greatly offended if one left the 'Overton' out of her name.

"She lived too far away from the city to have ice cream. So she always said the only ice cream she ever had was that which had been frozen by God. She would wrap her-





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self in a big blanket before a fire, when the weather had been cold enough so that they had ice, and eat her fill. The whole Greenhow family loved ice cream, and to go riding, even in an ox cart, would make us very happy.

"On one of my visits to Richmond Uncle Sam Greenhow and Uncle Peter Tinsley, his brother-in-law, asked me about the price of cattle in Texas. I knew very little about the price here but I told them that John, my husband, had bought a very fine cow that gave three gallons of milk, and I understood cows were cheap because he had paid only five dollars for that cow. The gentlemen did not say anything.

"My Cousin Hallie returned home with me to make me a visit that fall. We were in the back yard with my husband, looking at the cow, when I said, 'John, that certainly is a fine cow to cost only five dollars.' He turned to me with merriment in his eyes. 'Not five dollars but sixty-five dollars, and cheap at that,' he said.

"I was horror-stricken and explained the conversation with Uncle Sam in Virginia. John did not realize I had taken him seriously when he said it had cost only five dollars. I went back in the house to talk it over with Hallie. She remembered the conversation and said to me, 'When you made that re-





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mark and left the room Father said to Uncle Peter, "Peter, if I did not know little Maria is the most truthful woman in the world, I would think she is fibbing about the price of that cow!"

"It was Uncle Sam who first took me to see my grandmother. She was Mrs. Frances Elizabeth Williams Nelson. She had married, seventeen years after Grandfather Williams died, a Major Nelson of Mecklenberg County who had a tremendous plantation on the River Dan. He also owned a town house in the court end of Richmond.

"After the war my grandmother gave up the Richmond home her husband had left her—Major Nelson only lived two years after he and Grandmother were married—and had a lovely suite of rooms with Miss Marion Fischer, furnished with her own beautiful furniture. I still use that furniture in my home in San Antonio.

"On that first visit, going with Uncle Sam, she waited for us for awhile in the parlor, sitting with a fan in her hand as was her custom. But we were a little late in arriving so my grandmother had decided to go upstairs to her room, but she left word that I was to go right up. When I entered her room she was standing in front of the old bureau which I now have here. She was delighted to see me and after talking





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awhile she asked me to come the next morning, which I did, Uncle Sam taking me by the house as I knew nothing of finding my way around Richmond.

"She wanted to take me to see other members of the family. She took me to call on my Aunt Martha Maury, Aunt Mary Wyatt and to see my mother's sister, Aunt Anne Curtis Mumford. Everyone was most cordial and delighted to see me and seemed to take me into their hearts immediately with invitations to visit them in their homes.

"Oh, the sweetness and loveliness of walking along the shady streets of Richmond with my grandmother! The maple trees along the borders of the streets were gorgeous at that time of the year. My grandmother was exquisite in every detail of her daily life. She was considered the salt of the earth and of generosity beyond words.

"She was a woman whose whole life was devoted to charitable deeds. I remember once an impulsive act of kindness to my father which saved our home. For many years there was litigation over a strip of land on Soledad Street. Much of it from Salinas to Martin was tied up in an old Spanish land grant. This suit was continued from year to year and carried from one court to another for more than twenty years. Finally it was decided against us. When Grandmother





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heard of the decision and learned that the sum of \$800 was demanded, she came forward immediately and sent a check for that sum.

"It was the sending of this \$800 which reduced her principal to such an extent that at last my husband and I took charge of her.

"During my last visit to Richmond, with Mary a baby in arms, John two and Annie eight years old, my cousin, Richard Maury, said that under the circumstances of the reduced principal and the low rate of interest on my grandmother's estate, her income was greatly reduced. I told him immediately that we would assume full responsibility for the continuance of payments to her and asked that not one word be said to her about it. But Cousin Maury was not willing that it should be handled that way, so she was told.

"My husband and I took charge of her from that time until her death, which came in a short time. We always felt that to do this for such a Saint was indeed a privilege.

"On one of my visits to her I looked around for a certain little chair that suited me to sit beside her. I remarked what a lovely little chair it was and she said, 'Why, my daughter, that was your father's little chair.' So I loved it before I knew it had





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been his. The same little chair is by my bed now.

“On my last visit to Richmond my grandmother gave me the furniture, my father’s diploma, and a picture of herself and my father when he had been a cadet at West Point. I have also her odor box, six cut glass bottles. She asked me always to find a place for it on the bureau she gave me. I always have done that.

“My sweet friend, Mrs. Richard Negley (Laura Burleson) came in a few years ago with six different odors, old and rare, which I cherish to this day.

“A very interesting story is told of my grandmother. She was living on a plantation one winter. She was a Baptist and one of her neighbors, who lived several miles away, was a Baptist minister who had a very large family, as usual. She sent a wagon load of groceries to him. The driver asked the minister to accept the offering with my grandmother’s love. Then he unloaded a barrel of flour. The minister said, ‘Please give my love to Mrs. Nelson and thank her for this flour,’ and started to walk back to the house. The driver said, ‘Please wait. There is some more.’

“He proceeded to unload a barrel of sugar, a large sack of coffee, a box of tea, a sack





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of rice and other things until the wagon was empty, to the astonishment of the minister.

"I never went to see her that she did not go to her wardrobe, which now occupies a place of honor in my room, and open the door and take from it a slice of fruit cake, an orange or an apple, and very often a five dollar bill to give me.

"On one occasion when I went to Richmond I took my children with me, having promised my father that whenever it was possible I would take the new babies to see Grandmother. My daughter Annie had a large doll baby. Of course during the long journey it had been mussed somewhat and its hair was not very smooth. I heard her asking Aunt Charity, my maid and the children's Mammy, please to brush and comb the doll's hair and put on a fresh dress and a blue sash.

"She was very particular about everything. She was very broad in her outlook on life. Although she was a Baptist it was her wish that a Reverend Mr. Fair, pastor of the First Presbyterian church in Richmond, should assist at her funeral services."

It was on the occasion of her first return visit to Richmond that Mrs. James was taken sick and had to be returned to Texas in the summer of 1881. She recalls the events that led up to her return.





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"In January, 1881, my sister wanted me to return to her home in Lynchburg before going home. I went there under protest of my relatives in Richmond who implored me not to leave. I was never considered very strong and in Richmond I was regarded as a very delicate girl.

"However I returned to visit my sister, Fanny. She had four children, Fanny, Bessie, Curtis and Paige. Paige was born after I arrived and I took entire charge of him. Dear Aunt Maria Curtis came up from Richmond to help and three of us slept in one bed, Aunt Maria, Bessie and I. I was in the middle.

"I had a very heavy cough and always carried a little package of hoarhound drops. When in the night Aunt Maria would feel me reach for a drop—she was deaf—she would do the same. Instead of one drop I usually had two.

"My sister did all her own sewing. While I was there all the finishing would be handed to me. I did all the buttonholes and worked steadily. My cough continually got worse. When a paroxysm of coughing would come on I usually had a baby in my arms. I would drop him on the bed and go out on the porch with snow piled high around me. There I would cough so hard I often would have to hang to the rail to keep from falling.





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“My sister made a remark to me one day when she was handing me some sewing, that proved prophetic. She said, ‘Maria, I believe you are destined to finish my life’s work for me.’ Neither of us knew at the time how true it was. Because of her sudden death years afterward she presented me with her baby daughter to rear, educate and bring up as my own child. This I did gladly. I have often thought that the grief of losing my sister was more than compensated by the gift of her child. It was so splendid to have her.

“My health began failing rapidly that spring. A doctor was sent for and I was put to bed. In the early summer my sister wired my mother to send money by telegraph for my return home. I came back to Texas in July, 1881. I never realized that I had been so low until our beloved Dean Richardson said to me during one of his visits, ‘Maria, I am glad to see that you are so much better. When you first returned I expected to preach your funeral service almost any day.’ I was better but I improved very slowly.

“During one of my visits to Richmond I said to my Cousin Sallie, ‘This time I want to go to my grandfather’s grave.’

“He was buried in the old Shoko cemetery, which is older than Hollywood. He



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was buried in the Greenhow section and was only 28 years old when he died, leaving my father a baby six weeks old. There had been a double wedding, Frances and Anne Greenhow marrying Thomas and William Williams.

“Every time I had mentioned a visit to his grave before I had been discouraged. My cousin would say, ‘You might find your grandfather’s tombstone in bad repair, or discolored from drippings from leaves.’

“As much as I had wanted to go, I had not insisted. But this time I was determined not to be turned aside. Cousin Chrissie and May went with me.

“My cousin obtained the number of the lot from the governor of Shoko cemetery, and it was easily found. When I reached the Greenhow lot it was my delight to find his marble tomb in perfect condition, glowing white, massed with daisies and other flowers. Near his tomb is one of the most exquisite monuments I ever have beheld. It was made in Florence, Italy, and is of marble. It is for a young girl who had been carried from Richmond to Italy for her health, and died there. It represents the Angel Sower with wings partly folded, pausing with open hand sowing seed. Underneath in the inscription, ‘Sown in weakness,





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raised in power.' It was so exquisite that it was entered into the United States duty free on account of its beauty."



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## CHAPTER VIII

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"I remember," says Mrs. James, "that we were taught to call Colonel Withers 'Uncle John,' and his splendid wife who had been Miss Anita Dwyer of the noted Dwyer family of near San Antonio, was 'Aunt Anita.' "

It was in company with Colonel Withers that Colonel Williams returned to Texas following the collapse of the Confederate cause. Congress had acted quickly in removing disabilities of both men and had reinstated them as citizens of the United States. It was easier of accomplishment because both had resigned before taking Confederate service and therefore were not rated as deserters from the United States army.

Colonel Williams was accounted a wealthy man before the war. His inheritance from his father and his step-father had amounted to a considerable fortune. In the early days of his being stationed in San





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Antonio he had purchased what was then a good house on Soledad Street, near what is now the intersection of West Martin.

But like so many other Southerners the war had swept his entire fortune away. He came back to Texas, therefore, to set about earning a livelihood for his little family, leaving them temporarily in Richmond. Travel, until the railroads could be rebuilt, was exceedingly difficult immediately after the close of the war. The two old friends could make the trip. But they both left their families until travel was made easier.

"A strange thing happened when Thomas Greenhow Williams, Jr., and John Withers, Jr., were born," recalls Mrs. James, speaking of the close friendship between the two families. "They came the same day and almost at the same hour. My father wrote that Thomas Greenhow Williams, Jr., had arrived for breakfast, and Uncle John notified his friend that John Withers, Jr., was on time for lunch.

"It was Colonel Withers' eldest daughter who married General John L. Bullis, the noted Indian fighter."

As soon as they could Mrs. Williams and Mrs. Withers and their children followed their husbands to Texas. They landed at Indianola and made the trip from the coast to San Antonio in an ambulance.





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"Uncle John rode out to meet our ambulance," Mrs. James says. "We little children all were happy to be back in Texas. We had stopped a few miles out of the city and Uncle John arrived on horseback. He took each of us out of the ambulance on his saddle, kissed and petted us.

"It was nearly Christmas time (1865). All the Christmas we had was what Aunt Anita made for us and gave us. My present was a box imported from France containing parlor furniture for my doll house. It was tiny and was upholstered in red brocaded satin and finished around the edges with a little fringe. The little set was remembered and much loved through the years.

"Colonel Withers and his family lived out on the Dwyer ranch and we children would often be invited out on summer days for a visit. I remember yet those huge slices of buttered bread with sugar fixed by Uncle John himself—such big slices with so much butter and sugar!

"My father together with Uncle John and a retired United States army officer, General William Steele, went into the wholesale commission business. They were three army officers who knew nothing on earth about store-keeping. They had no counters or show cases or anything of the kind. Bales





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of wool, cotton and other things were piled high on the floor.

"Their sales were often few because, after showing a prospective customer what they had, on numerous occasions one of them would make a remark that would prevent a sale. One would say, 'My friend, I would not advise you to buy that, because——' and there would follow a statement as to what was the matter with the object in question. The surprised customer, as you might imagine, usually dropped the package as though it were hot, and left as quickly as he could get away.

"The store was a one-story adobe at the corner of Navarro and Commerce Streets, diagonally across the street from where the Groos bank now stands, and extended back to the river. There gentlemen visitors used to sit and talk when they came in—John James, Colonel Mecklin, who also was of the class of 1849 at West Point, and others.

"There was no bridge across the river except a foot bridge which was supported by barrels floating on the water. Nearby the old Lewis mill was kept continually grinding, the wide blades of its wheel dripping with green moss. We children sometimes would stop so long to watch and admire it that we were late to the German-English school. Then, when we had a little spare





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time, we would jump up and down on the foot bridge, and get ourselves thoroughly splashed with water.

"Vehicles crossed the river by fording it, and there were many places where it was not fordable.

"I am still a member in good standing of the old German-English School Association. I was president of the ex-students' organization.

"We had classes in bead work and tapestry as well as in the three R's. I was about nine years old and probably too young to work, so I was seated on a desk and asked to sing while the others were busy with their tasks. I remember singing 'Shepherd of the Valley,' 'The Merry, Merry Sunshine,' and songs like that.

"Our literary subjects were the *Scholar's Companion*, rhetoric and our readers. I have often thought that the *Scholar's Companion* was a very valuable book for the schools, even more valuable than the dictionary, because in giving a word it explained its spelling and the different meanings. We learned to spell while we were learning the meaning of words.

"I remember being in a spelling bee once and was holding out splendidly, I thought, feeling I would be the last little girl on my feet. But when the teacher gave out the





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word 'salmon,' down I went. I left the letter 'l' out of it.

"In that school I took elementary work both in German and Spanish. I think whatever it is we learn, it all helps. Now I am studying friendship. After much research I have come to the conclusion that if, at the end of a long life, one can count on just one friend, one is indeed fortunate."

Among the bright spots in Mrs. James' memory of her childhood were visits to the Dwyer ranch where Colonel and Mrs. John Withers lived before they moved to their home on South Laredo Street.

"The Dwyer ranch," Mrs. James explains, "was located where Kelly Field is now, on the Leon about six miles from San Antonio. We used to take late afternoon walks, Aunt Anita and my mother with the children and nurses. Always we passed the private cemetery of the ranch. When we reached the tomb Aunt Anita would kneel at the door of the vault, her hands on her rosary, and say her prayers. We children would cluster near, on our knees also. I was about seven at that time. Seeing Aunt Anita there against the sunset has been a precious memory for seventy years.

"Years later when her daughter, Phenie (Josephine), was in a convent in Baltimore her mother wrote to her word of my en-





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gagement. Phenie wrote back in great distress asking who was left of her girlhood friends in San Antonio now that Maria was going to marry John James?"

In a city as small as San Antonio was shortly after the war, everybody knew everybody else. As both the Williams and the James families lived in town, naturally they were well acquainted. Mrs. James' memory of her husband's family goes back to her early childhood.

"My earliest remembrance of the James family was that they were living in the first two-story residence ever built in San Antonio. They were dear friends of my mother and father before I was born. My family had known them from Indianola days, Mrs. James having been Annie Milby, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Polk Milby of that city. Mr. Milby was a member of the first Texas Congress and was a signer of the Lone Star State's declaration of independence.

"The first child of the James family was John Herndon James, who became my husband in the years that followed. Our marriage united two families who had long been friends. Mrs. James had a large family of nine children. Laura was of my age and was my contemporary. There seemed to be a James for every Williams.





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"Laura and I spent many happy days in our childhood at the home of each other. The custom was that when we spent the day we took off whatever dress we were wearing and changed into a dress of the child visited. Laura was spending the day with me and I let her put on my new calico dress that my mother had just finished by hand, as she had no sewing machine. It had a low neck and short sleeves with a little sack to put on in the cool of the evening.

"Laura was swinging in our big swing which hung near the parlor window over which was a rare rose bush trailing clear to the top of the house. It was considered a great thing to be able to swing high enough standing up to bite off leaves from the rose vine and bring them down as trophies. Upon that occasion Laura managed to get mixed up with the rose branches and almost tore the new dress off her back.

"When my mother ran out she was almost overwhelmed. She caught Laura, thinking it was I, and had her well over her knee and was on the way toward giving her the spanking of her life when Laura turned and said, 'Mrs. Williams, it isn't Maria. It's me.' So Mama turned her loose and we all had a good laugh. Thus Laura and I both had a narrow escape and we often spoke of it in later years.





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"Down at Mrs. James' we always knew better than to ask for Laura to spend the day if Tom James was anywhere around. He seemed always to be standing at the foot of his Ma's bed, an arm around the bedpost. When we asked Laura to spend the day Tom would speak out before his Ma could say a word. 'Ma, don't let Laura go. Mrs. Williams has plenty of children of her own,' he would say. So Laura would stay at home.

"Upon one occasion when I was describing to my mother a perfectly beautiful hat of Laura's, made of white straw with pink French roses and tiny glass links that made a tinkling sound as she moved, and said I wanted one like it, she listened patiently and then said, in a consoling voice, 'My daughter, Mrs. James has such a long purse Laura can have all those beautiful things.'

"A few days later I went to see Laura again and while I was there Mrs. James went to her wardrobe to get some money. Much to my astonishment she took out a very small purse.

"So when I got home I said to my mother, 'You are mistaken about Mrs. James' purse. It is not long, but very small indeed.' Mother had a good laugh about that.

"One time when Edward Grenet was marrying Miss Gilbeau, Mrs. James asked me what my mother was going to wear to





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the wedding. I tried to describe the dress and told her about the gloves. She asked me how many buttons there were on the gloves. I said one. When I found out later that two buttons were much more fashionable I felt so very sorry Mother was unable to have more than one button.

"The happy atmosphere of my early home is with me still. Everybody would be gathered around the fire with the kerosene lamp on the table. The children reading. My father playing solitaire, or often kindly friends would come in to play chess with him, announcing themselves victors before beginning to play. But it was not often they were able to walk out as victors. My father played an excellent game, using the same chess board on which he played when he made the voyage around Cape Horn when a young man on the sailing vessel *Ida*.

"Among those who came often were General Frank Tompkins, Colonel Owens and Mr. Frank Grice, who afterward became owner of the Express.

"Many notable people were born on Solidad Street. The great Doctor Hugh Young lived next door but one to our house. Major Adams and his family who, in memory of his son, Charles, presented to St. Marks the baptismal fount which is still in use. Dean Walter R. Richardson, the beloved, lived





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there. It was he who helped to build St. Marks and who designed the beautiful carving of the pulpit and rail and the stained glass windows, which are yet so beautiful. All of my children and grandchildren were christened at St. Marks. Dean Richardson was for thirty-eight years the pastor of the church.

“As a little girl I played on the foundations of the church while it was being built. It had just been started when the war began and work was stopped for a number of years. General Robert E. Lee, while he was stationed in San Antonio as temporary commander of the Department of Texas, interested himself in getting the work started.

“It was great fun running up and down the high piles of materials. Wild flowers bloomed all about the location and poke berries grew in abundance. We children used to try to make ink from the berries.

“My dear sister Fanny was the bride at the first evening wedding at St. Marks. She married Edwin James Gresham of Richmond. There had been early morning weddings previously.

“I was one of the bridesmaids, the only one in a short dress, and I made the seventh. The others were Misses Bertie Ord, Mollie Augur, Helen Devine Nelson, Mary Ring-





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gold, Carrie Ord and Miss Anderson. I was greatly complimented afterward on my good behavior. It was my first appearance as a bridesmaid, and I don't know what they thought I might do, but I think I threatened to sit down and make faces and scare them all. My sister went to Richmond to live.

"Seven years afterwards she came back for her first visit and brought four children with her. It was during that visit that a great sorrow came to us in the death of my angel sister, Annie. Although the years have passed the sorrow seems the same, so fine and beautiful she was. She was confirmed the day before her death by the great and beloved Bishop Elliot with Dean Richardson assisting.

"When my father was transferred from Indianola to San Antonio, before I was born, he found a lack of accommodations for his family. In addition to the children there were a number of slaves he had brought from Virginia. So he bought a home. He was accounted a wealthy man at that time, an unusual thing for an army officer. The house, a new one built of rock, had just been finished by Doctor Lyons and was located on Soledad Street. I have often heard my father speak of being very fortunate in being able to secure it.





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"The third child was born not long after they reached San Antonio. She was Maria Williams. Sixteen months later the fourth child was born.

"My mother's sister, Aunt Maria Curtis, came to visit my mother and with her came her cousin, William Tyler. It made quite a large household in the home on Soledad.

"I remember my mother's maid was terribly afraid of the Mexicans, and wanted to know if they were really folks.

"The property on which our home was located ran clear back to the river where my father kept his pleasure boat. On the river also was a washhouse and a bathhouse. The bathhouse was made of canvas and was supported by barrels floating on the water. It was fastened to the bank by chains.

"The banks were very steep at our place but that made us safe from floods. Across the river from us were frequent floods. We children would go down to the bathhouse when we wanted a bath and get inside. Perhaps we wore a chemise and sometimes we had on nothing. We had a platform with steps leading down to the river.

"The washhouse had places fixed for tubs and a chimney that was well up above banks. Water was dipped from the river for the washing, and it was poured back into the river when the washing was over. I re-





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member my father would have a cedar bucket filled with water the last thing at night. It cooled that way. There was no ice in those days and no water works.

“The kitchen had a flagstone floor. Cooking was done over an open fireplace. Pots were hung from chains. A dutch oven was used for baking. Dough for bread never was cut. When it was made up it was broken off and placed in the dutch oven in circles. The top of the oven then was heaped with glowing coals and the oven was set in a bed of coals. When ironing was to be done the irons were heated the same way, on beds of coals.

“Aunt Maria Curtis came just before I was born and stayed until my mother returned to Richmond early in the war. I was born at daylight on October 6, 1859, according to my father's registration in the family Bible. I was born with a cowl over my face, so I was told, which is said to be a very rare occurrence, happening perhaps once in three hundred and fifty births. Charles Dickens is said to have had one.

“After the war we were glad to return to our home in San Antonio. It was the wish of my father and mother to start life anew in Texas.

“Aunt Maria had made for me a little traveling dress of calico into which she had





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placed two pockets in the seam, very like a man's pockets are installed. One of them was for my handkerchief. The other was for my little doll. I carried a match box with some clothes in it for the doll so I could dress it when I reached Texas.

"We left two little brothers in Virginia. There were two boys born to my mother while we were in Richmond, and two were lost. The youngest, my brother Tyler, was four months old when we returned to Texas. My mother often wept bitterly for the two who were buried at Hollywood.

"When we reached home we found a dear friend of the family superintending the sweeping of the chinaberries out of the yard. There was a good fire in my mother's room. Our furniture had very nearly all disappeared. Only a wardrobe, a bed and chairs were left. We had left our books at the Alamo for safekeeping, but they were not there. Years afterward some friend who had the family Bibles returned them, four volumes with gilt edges in embossed green Russian leather. They were placed on the back porch and we never did know where they had been.

"I have the rose that grew so high over the parlor window of my childhood here in my yard. It was dug up and transplanted at my new home at 514 Camaron Street and





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through the years has kept me company as I sit beside my window sewing. Every March it is full of pink roses. It is the rose whose leaves we children used to pluck when we would swing high up beside it.

“My mother went to California in the spring of 1870 to visit Uncle Tyler, one of the forty-niners from Puccoon. He was Mother’s youngest brother. This was soon after the Union Pacific was completed. She took with her my brother, Tyler, who was then five years old. It was a long trip as she had to go by way of Omaha, but my father arranged splendidly for her by asking army friends to look out for her where she had to change cars and see her safely to her trains. General Hood was particularly kind to her.

“When my mother reached San Francisco she was met by her beloved brother whom she had not seen for twenty years. So prominent was my Uncle Tyler that when he got to the depot and found Mother and they started to leave, the crowd was so thick it seemed for awhile they could not pass. Then some voice in the crowd called out, ‘Make way for Tyler Curtis,’ and immediately way was made for them.

“He had a magnificent home and when Mother returned and told us about it, it seemed like a fairy tale. At one time he was



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the second wealthiest man in San Francisco. He owned gold mines, was a merchant and had interests in many successful projects.

"After a delightful visit to her brother and his wife my mother returned to San Antonio with an extra trunk filled with beautiful clothes and gifts. As I was considered very dressy they sent me two silk dresses instead of one.

"Before my mother arrived home my father thought we would have to make everything beautiful for her. Among other things he had a new front gate with an iron latch built. But it always made a terrible racket when it was opened or shut. By means of the gate our neighbors were able to keep up with us and knew when our beaux came and the next day likely would ask us who they were. Included among them were Mr. John James, Lieutenant Chandler, Mr. Trueheart, Ed Gilbert and Ed Pennell."





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## CHAPTER IX

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“Colonel John Withers was the first to withdraw from the wholesale commission business,” remembers Mrs. James. “He accepted a position as cashier offered by Colonel George W. Brackenridge in the newly organized San Antonio National Bank.”

It was in January, 1873, following the withdrawal of Colonel Withers from the firm, that the mayor and aldermen of San Antonio, by resolution, asked Colonel Williams to go to Washington and use every possible influence in securing an appropriation of \$100,000 for the establishment of a military depot at San Antonio.

The matter had been up before. It had received the approval of Congress almost three years prior to that time and steps leading to the first appropriation had been taken long before that.

It was understood that favorable consideration of the proposal would be made



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by the Government provided the city would furnish the site. Several locations were offered and refused. It was a fourth offer of a tract of forty acres made in May, 1870, that finally was approved. However, the records show the approval was not made until June, 1871.

Meanwhile an appropriation, which placed to the credit of the Quartermaster Department the sum of \$100,000 for the construction of the proposed buildings, was passed by Congress and approved by the President on May 5, 1870. But nothing had been done toward starting any construction work on the buildings.

The following year it was learned, according to Colonel Williams' notes on the matter, that certain plans had been overlooked and that a portion of the site desired was not included in the tract donated. Consequently a further donation of forty-three acres was made, bringing the total acreage up to eighty-three, and this was approved on January 2, 1872.

On June 28 of the same year, no construction having been started, the Secretary of War determined that the appropriation was expiring and must be converted back into the treasury. Further action, therefore, was impossible until a new appropriation could be passed.





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In recommendations contained in his message to Congress in December, 1872, President Ulysses S. Grant included the \$100,000 appropriation, urging Congress to repass it, the project having been approved by the War Department. Then, under date of January 2, 1873, for reasons unknown, General W. W. Belknap, Secretary of War, addressed a communication to the Senate and House withdrawing his recommendations.

Fearing that this action on the part of the War Department would prevent the appropriation being passed, the San Antonio city council took its action and named Colonel Williams to represent the city at Washington.

Armed with this authority and with recommendations not only from General Phil Sheridan and General Meigs, but also from prominent citizens in the Southwest, Colonel Williams went to the national capital. Included among some of Colonel Williams' private papers, still in existence, is a copy of a telegram from T. W. Pierce, later one of the founders of the Waters-Pierce Oil Company, promising "all the influence I can command" in support of the proposed appropriation and construction. At that time Mr. Pierce was located in Galveston.

In spite of the attitude of Secretary Belk-





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nap, the reason for which is not made clear in Colonel Williams' reports, a new appropriation was passed and was approved by President Grant on March 3, 1873. But authorization for the expenditure of that particular appropriation never was made by Secretary Belknap.

Colonel Williams was chosen as the city's representative because it was stated he was the only man in the Southwest who could have accomplished the task. He had a personal acquaintance with the President, dating back to his days at West Point where General Grant himself was graduated and afterward was an instructor for several years.

"President Grant says in his memoirs," notes Mrs. James, "that he was personally acquainted with members of seven classes at West Point, having taught there three years after his graduation."

The San Antonio emissary also had a personal acquaintance with members of the cabinet and with a number of leaders in Congress.

It has been suggested that perhaps Secretary Belknap was averse to spending money in Texas on account of a remark ascribed to General Sheridan, that if he owned both Texas and hell he would rent Texas and live in hell. However, Colonel Williams' private papers show that General Sheridan





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avored the construction at the time, whatever might have been his previous attitude toward Texas. Having seen military service on the Texas border himself in his young manhood it is thought that "Fighting Phil" gained his view of Texas from the hot, wild, dreary lands along the border, practically unpopulated by civilized folk during his time there, and infested with Indians.

In any event Colonel Williams' papers show that about three weeks after the approval of the appropriation, in an order directed to the Quartermaster General dated March 24, 1873, Secretary Belknap forbade all officers of that Department from taking any steps toward the erection of the proposed military depot buildings at San Antonio. For more than a year nothing more was done.

About May 1, 1874, Colonel Williams again was sent to Washington as the representative of the city, to urge action in the matter. He presented a memorial to President Grant, under date of May 4, 1874, setting forth the situation. He appealed to the President in the name of justice and equity to see that the law of the previous year, which had been flouted by a member of his cabinet, was duly executed.

No action resulted from this appeal so he took the matter up with Texas representatives in Congress. First he saw Represen-





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tative John Hancock and Senator Morgan C. Hamilton and requested that all of the Texas delegates go in a body to the President and present the claims of the state. Mr. Hancock, Colonel Williams later reported, took the matter up with other members of the delegation. But the visit never was made.

About this time Secretary Belknap began urging the passage of a bill allocating the money appropriated for the San Antonio depot to other projects in Texas. Colonel Williams asked Mr. Hancock to offer an amendment to that bill which would have the effect of reappropriating the sum for the original purpose. The representative suggested it might have a better chance of acceptance if offered in the Senate. Senator Hamilton, Colonel Williams noted, declined to interfere. But Senator James W. Flanagan agreed to the proposal and carried out his promise. The result was that the availability of the money for the depot project was extended for another twelve months.

The expenditure at last was authorized by the Secretary of War on May 6, 1875. Contract for construction was awarded to Ed Brahn and Company of San Antonio for \$83,900. The original buildings were accepted February 4, 1878. What is now known as the Quadrangle was completed by December, 1879, and on December 22 of





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that year the Quartermaster depot, which previously had been using the Alamo as a storehouse, was moved to what was then called the new Quartermaster depot on Government Hill.

The original buildings were of stone and were erected in the form of a hollow square, the main entrance being where it is now, facing Grayson Street. They were all of a single story except over the entrance which was two stories in height. Officers and enlisted men were quartered within the Quadrangle when it was first occupied.

Further difficulties relative to the site again arose when it was discovered that certain lots which the Government desired included were not in the lands donated. It was learned they were the property of N. Montgomery and his wife who were supposed to be living in Baltimore.

"My father went into three different states to find the lady and gentleman who owned the lots that were wanted," remembers Mrs. James.

As a matter of fact he visited three states before he located them in a fourth. At the conclusion of his mission in Washington Colonel Williams went to Baltimore to try to persuade the Montgomery's to sell their property to the city. He found them gone and after some difficulty secured a new ad-





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dress in Richmond. When he reached that city they were not to be found. At last he was given an address in New York City. It was there he succeeded in locating them in New Jersey.

"When my father approached the lady about the purchase," says Mrs. James, "she said with quite an air, 'We were offered \$300 for it last year.' To which my father replied, 'I am authorized by the city of San Antonio to offer you that same amount.'"

"It was bought that same afternoon and all the papers were in my father's possession before he left them. And on that ground stands the first unit of our headquarters of the Eighth Corps area."

From notations by Colonel Williams among his papers it is evident considerable diplomatic urging was required before the deal was closed. He notes that he did not leave them until he had the deed in his pocket and had paid for the land.

The post was named Fort Sam Houston in War Department orders in 1890. It was, of course, in honor of General Sam Houston, Texas' leader during the fight for freedom, later President of the Republic of Texas and still later, after annexation, its Governor.

Additional buildings, a multitude of them, since have been added and the boundary lines extended until now it is one of the



down in the morning. It was the first time  
that they were ever in the city. It was the  
first time that they were ever in the city. It  
was the first time that they were ever in the  
city. It was the first time that they were  
ever in the city.

When my father was a boy, he was  
about the same age as you are now. He  
was a very good boy. He was a very good  
boy. He was a very good boy. He was a  
very good boy. He was a very good boy.  
He was a very good boy. He was a very  
good boy. He was a very good boy.

It was a very good boy. He was a very  
good boy. He was a very good boy. He  
was a very good boy. He was a very good  
boy. He was a very good boy. He was a  
very good boy. He was a very good boy.  
He was a very good boy. He was a very  
good boy. He was a very good boy.

From the time that I was a boy, I  
was a very good boy. I was a very good  
boy. I was a very good boy. I was a very  
good boy. I was a very good boy. I was  
a very good boy. I was a very good boy.  
I was a very good boy. I was a very good  
boy. I was a very good boy.

The boy was named John. He was a  
very good boy. He was a very good boy.  
He was a very good boy. He was a very  
good boy. He was a very good boy. He  
was a very good boy. He was a very good  
boy. He was a very good boy.

John was a very good boy. He was a  
very good boy. He was a very good boy.  
He was a very good boy. He was a very  
good boy. He was a very good boy. He  
was a very good boy. He was a very good  
boy. He was a very good boy.

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greatest army posts in the United States. From a beginning of only forty acres included in the original donation by the city, the acreage has been increased to 3,270.53. And from a mere handful of officers and enlisted men who occupied the old Quadrangle for the first time just before Christmas, 1879, the establishment has grown to 217 officers and 7,349 enlisted personnel, a recent report shows. Acreage and personnel noted applies only to Fort Sam Houston and not to the various flying fields which the army maintains in the vicinity of San Antonio.

"The staff post was the first erected," comments Mrs. James. "The upper infantry post followed.

"There have been so many distinguished officers of our Army stationed at San Antonio and among them were commanders who were known well by my family—General Christopher C. Augur, General Frederick Dent Grant, a son of the silent Ulysses, and General Ronald MacKenzie, known as a fiery Scot who always preferred a hot fight to a hot meal. Then of course there was General John L. Bullis and a host of others."

While general approval was expressed by officials of the city regarding the success of Colonel Williams' mission, there was one note of somewhat bitter criticism. It was





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not, however, directed toward the Colonel himself but to his political affiliations, particularly as he had been a Staff officer in the army of the Confederacy during the war.

In an editorial in the San Antonio Express of June 19, 1873, Julius W. Van Slyck, editor and proprietor, bitterly assailed the appointment of Colonel Williams, which followed his mission in behalf of the military depot, as Indian Commissioner for the removal of the Kickapoo Indians from the Mexican border to Oklahoma.

The editorial, however, opens with the words, "Personally we have no objection to the appointment of Colonel Williams \* \* \* He will attend to the removal of the Kickapoos as well as anybody, perhaps better than many \* \* \*"

But the objection was based on his appointment instead of that of a Republican, and contained a long harangue on the subject. A copy of this editorial as well as Colonel Williams' reply, itself a work of art, also published in the Express, will be found in the appendix hereto.

On the other hand there is, among Colonel Williams' papers, a letter of thanks and approval from Mayor F. Giraud of San Antonio and satisfaction of the officials of the city with the manner in which the mission was handled.





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Mrs. James remembers an incident which occurred years later at the Post.

"General Bullis, stationed at San Antonio, had just been made a Brigadier-General," she says. "He planned to celebrate the event with a great stag dinner.

"It happened that Theodore Roosevelt, President of the United States, his cabinet and a party of friends were en route on a tour of the country and arrived in San Antonio that afternoon. Of course General Bullis hastened to send an invitation to the President and his party. The President sent his kind regards and expressed his deepest regrets at not being able to accept, explaining that he was not officially in San Antonio until the next morning, but added that he knew he was missing a bully time. But his staff attended the party anyway. The private car of the President was parked on a little spur on Grayson Street facing the Quadrangle, almost within hearing of the celebration."



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## CHAPTER X

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One of the highly colorful episodes in the history of the Southwest, which occurred a few years after the war, touched very closely the family of Mrs. James.

It was in 1873. At the conclusion of his mission as representative of San Antonio in Washington, Colonel Williams was named by President Grant as one of two special commissioners to go to Mexico and try to induce itinerant bands of Indians, particularly the Kickapoos, to return to their reservations in Oklahoma. Pottawatomies, Lipans, Mescaleros and other Indians also were to be induced to move if possible.

Arrangements had been made with the Government of Mexico to cooperate in the undertaking. The second commissioner was H. M. Atkinson of Nebraska.

History, particularly the published reports of the special commissioners, states that for years Indian bands had been raiding the bor-





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der country, leaving death and destruction behind them. It was believed that other outlaws were implicated in the raids, making them under cover of the reputation of the Indians. It was known that the border, on both sides of the Rio Grande, had become a rendezvous for a number of the lawless element, both American and Mexican.

It was believed, if the marauding Indians could be moved away, that the border troubles would be greatly diminished and perhaps raiding could be stopped entirely. With the Indians gone it was thought other raiders would not be so likely to continue their depredations.

The history of Kickapoo hostility went back a number of years before the attempt to remove them from the border. The first movement of American Indians to Mexico is reported in 1852 when quite a large band of Kickapoos made the journey across Texas, stopping soon after crossing the International line. In 1863 another dissatisfied band joined the first. An incident which occurred during the progress of the second band across Texas is blamed for the special hostility of the tribe.

According to the *Pictorial History of Texas*, Reverend Homer S. Thrall, these Indians were on their way to join their fellows in Mexico to avoid taking part in





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the War Between the States (1863). About a thousand of them began the journey.

They were encamped on Dove Creek, a tributary of the Concho River, when they were discovered by pursuing Texans who numbered about four hundred. The Indians were in a dense thicket.

It is stated that the Texans, a detachment of Confederate soldiers, believed the Indians were a marauding band. They charged them in the thicket. A fierce battle raged all day.

Afterwards the Indians are said to have claimed that when they saw the soldiers approaching they sent out a flag of truce with a message to the effect that they were making a peaceful passage of the state to join their tribesmen in Mexico. They reported that the flag was fired upon and that the flag bearers were killed.

Whatever the situation both sides are said to have sustained heavy losses in the all-day battle. The Indians, both by reason of their superior numbers and on account of their protected strategic position, held a big advantage. The soldiers were unable to rout them, although they charged into the thicket over and over again before darkness put an end to the fighting.

During the night, rain fell heavily and it still was raining the next morning. The





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soldiers withdrew and the Indians escaped and made their way on to Mexico.

Thereafter, as one historian mildly puts it (Hodge in his *Handbook of the American Indian North of Mexico*) "they were a constant source of annoyance to the border settlements."

Either they, or other Indians or groups posing as Indians, were much more than an "annoyance." Whether it was that American and Mexican outlaws were taking advantage of the presence of the Indians to commit their depredations was not known definitely. But raid after raid was made upon isolated ranches and settlements. Cattle were killed or driven off. Ranchers and others were murdered and their buildings and possessions destroyed by fire. It was practically impossible for troops to protect the long line of the border against predatory invasions.

So it was proposed to move the Indians back to their reservation on the North Fork of the Canadian River in Oklahoma. The Kickapoos were known to be in a state of abject poverty. Other tribes were believed to be almost as poor. Special commissioners, therefore, were appointed and sent to Mexico to work out the details of the removal.

Much of the information relative to their work is contained in a report to E. P. Smith,





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Commissioner of Indian Affairs, made by the special commissioners and published in the report of the Secretary of the Interior to the first session of the Forty-third Congress.

In stately, precise language the commissioners told their story. Yet it is evident certain phases were greatly minimized. That at times they were in great danger of losing their lives is barely mentioned.

They reported that certain influences, both Mexican and American, had been at work trying to arouse the Indians against them and added that it had been suggested that the commissioners should be killed.

They were in a wild country miles from civilization. They were four in the midst of hundreds of savages, two American commissioners, a special Mexican commissioner and an interpreter they had brought with them from Kansas. Rumors of proposed assassination must have been floating around them nearly all the time. Yet for months they remained to try to accomplish their mission in the face of what often must have seemed impossible obstacles. And even after it was over, and they were safely returned, they made little comment on their own hardships or dangers. They reported that, in view of the ends to be gained if they were





successful, it seemed necessary for them to remain and do what they could.

Mrs. James remembers something about it, although she was then less than fourteen years old.

"After the passage of the depot appropriation bill," Mrs. James says, "another bill was passed by Congress and President Grant offered my father the position of United States Commissioner to remove from the border of Texas about six hundred Kickapoo Indians, a very hazardous and difficult position."

Referring to the matter again she remarked, "We little realized the hazard and danger of that appointment of my father."

It is likely that Colonel Williams did not wish to excite his family and therefore said very little about the dangers involved.

The report mentioned is dated October 8, 1873. It portrays the accomplishment of what was almost impossible, in view of all the circumstances, and sheds light on the courage and diplomacy of the commissioners. Reading between the lines it sounds more like a Mother Goose tale than an incident in actual history.

The commissioners received their instructions on March 20, 1873, and proceeded to the border. There was no railroad into Texas at that time. Indianola still was the





port of entry for the Southwestern section of Texas. Travel was either on horseback or by ambulance, or some other conveyance, inland from the Gulf.

The commissioners reached Fort Duncan on April 30. It had been expected that Governor Cepeda of the Mexican state of Coahuila would meet them there. They waited more than a week and when the Mexican governor failed to make his appearance they set out on the long trek to his capital, Saltillo, where they arrived May 15.

There was a general discussion of the situation. The Americans proposed to try to move all of the hostile bands from the border country back to reservations in Indian Territory. Governor Cepeda agreed heartily with the proposal. No doubt he was thoroughly tired of the more or less constant raiding. Incidentally the governor kept faith with the Americans, regardless of heavy pressure brought upon him from certain quarters of Mexico. So did a special commissioner he appointed to accompany the Americans, Sr. Antonio Montero. In the face of grave danger it appears that Montero held his ground with his American companions, refusing to be frightened away or to change his plans.

His stay in Saltillo was made pleasant for Colonel Williams because he was entertained





in the O'Sullivan home there, old friends of his. Later the daughter of the family, who had meanwhile married, Mrs. Kate O'Sullivan Molony, moved to San Antonio and built her home at 115 East Laurel Street. The home still stands. It was purchased in 1904 by Mr. William Aubrey who now lives there.

The little group left Saltillo on May 20, passing through Monclova to contact the Indians at Santa Rosa.

The mission was imperiled by a sudden raid into Mexico on the part of General MacKenzie just before the commissioners reached their destination. It was believed that General MacKenzie thought he was striking marauding Lipans. The Indians he attacked were Kickapoos. A number were killed and a group of women and children were made prisoners.

The commissioners, in their report, made no complaint about the action of the General. They appeared to feel the fighting Scot was fully justified in making his raid. However, they did try to explain to the aroused Kickapoos and Pottawatomies later that the raid had been intended against the Lipans and that General MacKenzie had believed he was striking a band of that tribe when he made his attack.

The Indians were badly scattered, sulky





and suspicious. It was June 1 before enough of them could be brought together to hold a council. Both before and after that meeting there must have been many anxious hours for the commissioners. They were hearing many rumors. There was persistent opposition to the removal of the Indians. There was quite open proposals of violence to the members of the mission.

The Indians were hungry, ill-clad, wretched. Supplies had to be secured for them, which was very difficult and expensive. But it was the one way to softening the hearts of the Kickapoos. In short order quantities of supplies were brought in by the opposition and distributed to the Indians.

In their report the commissioners declared that not only certain Americans in Mexico were implicated in the opposition, but also that unnamed Texans were taking an active part against them. Most of the Mexican opposition was said to have come from the enemies of Governor Cepeda, and apparently he had a host of them who were very active and bitter.

Meanwhile the captives taken by General MacKenzie were being held in San Antonio. The commissioners assured the Kickapoos they were being well treated. It was promised if the tribe would accept the offer of the





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Government and return to Indian Territory, the captives would be released to accompany them.

The conferences were long drawn out. At last the Indians were wavering. It was suggested that certain of the chiefs accompany the commissioners to San Antonio to visit the captives. This was agreeable to the Indians and the trip was made.

The captives were being given good treatment. The representatives of the Kickapoo were pleased. The commissioners tried to secure permission to remove the captives to some location near the border where they might be liberated immediately upon the start of the Indians toward their reservation. The request was denied. The captives would be freed, it was promised, to go to the reservation with the rest of their tribe, but for no other purpose. They were being held as hostages.

It was on this visit of Kickapoo chiefs in San Antonio that St. Marks witnessed a strange sight. Colonel Williams invited the visitors to go to church with him. They agreed. In full regalia, aloof, dignified, the Indians filed in and took their seats at the rear, sat intently listening during the service.

Mrs. James has a clear memory of that visit to St. Marks.

"The Indians were brought, about six of





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them, to San Antonio," she says. "I remember that my father took them to church at St. Marks the Sunday they were here. My father had provided them with money for the offertory and had instructed them what to do with it."

But it didn't work out as planned. General Ord of the United States army was carrying one of the plates and normally would have presented it to the visitors. He took one good look at the Indians and instead of following the usual procedure, turned back to the chancel without giving them an opportunity to make their offerings.

"After church," says Mrs. James, "my father spoke to General Ord. He told him that the Indians were much disappointed. The General explained he was afraid the Indians would misunderstand and instead of putting money into the plate, might help themselves to what was already there."

And, too, it might have been that the General very much doubted that the dusky visitors had any money, or if they had that they would have any idea of parting with it in such a fashion.

Mrs. James remembers how her father and his companions started on their way to the border.

"General Christopher C. Augur, commanding the Texas department, requested





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General MacKenzie, in command on the border, to send an escort of soldiers with my father to the border. The front seat of his ambulance looked like an armory, with Winchester rifles and other firearms all about, and the members of the party fully armed.

"We children looked after the stage when it left our gate on Soledad Street, not knowing whether or not we ever would see him again.

"The Indians were on both sides of the border, but mostly in Mexico, committing depredations and taking refuge below the International line with what they had stolen on the American side. It was a mission of utmost delicacy and had to be done with the consent of the Government of Mexico, the consent of the Mexican states on the border, and of the Indians themselves."

Mrs. James remembers hearing her father tell of several of his experiences during his travels in Mexico at that time. On one occasion he was riding with a companion in a stage coach. Another passenger in the coach was a large Mexican who had in charge a chest of money to be used in a payroll.

Colonel Williams and his companion occupied the center seat in the coach and therefore were riding backward. So they had a





good view of the road behind them. The Mexican was fast asleep, his chest of money apparently safe in the boot of the coach.

"My father had not gone to sleep although nearly everyone else in the coach was sleeping," Mrs. James says. "He sat staring back along the road, looking at nothing in particular, when suddenly he noticed two horsemen swing in from the roadside behind the coach. They rode up rapidly, overtaking the coach. My father awakened his companion and tried to awaken the Mexican on the rear seat, but failed for the moment.

"Then, as the horsemen divided to ride up one on each side of the coach, my father covered one of them with his Winchester, and his companion covered the other.

"They protested they were friendly and offered no violence, shortly dropping back behind the coach again. But my father kept watching them. It was not long before two more horsemen joined the first two and once more they divided and rode up beside the coach. And once more my father and his companion had them covered. By this time the Mexican also was awake and taking a hand in protecting the coach.

"Once more they fell back, declaring they wished to travel with the coach for better protection for themselves. And again two





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more horsemen joined them, making six in all. After a long wait they divided again and rode up beside the coach. My father and his companions were taking no chances. Again the group was covered with Winchester.

"The riders remained in the vicinity of that coach until daybreak. Whether they were robbers or not of course my father never knew, but he and the others in the coach believed they were, and that they knew a considerable sum of money was being transported on that vehicle.

"If they were robbers it seems likely they might not only have robbed the coach and everybody in it, but might also have killed everybody as well."

On another occasion Colonel Williams was conducting a supply train through the wilderness. It was necessary to secure supplies for the Indians in order to deal with them. The commissioner was near the rear of his train of pack mules, watching for signs of robbers behind him, when suddenly the train stopped.

"My father told us he rode hurriedly forward to find out what the matter might be," Mrs. James said. "When he reached the head of the train he found his men beginning to unpack the mules. He asked them what they were doing. He was told they had





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stopped to make camp, it being a fine place to camp. It was only the middle of the afternoon.

"My father knew if he let them do as they pleased he would lose control of them. So he spoke to them sharply.

"'You will stop when I order you to stop,' he told them. 'We will not stop here. Repack those mules and go on.'

"The leaders hesitated, talked among themselves a little and my father sternly repeated his order. Finally they obeyed and went on several miles before he ordered a halt for the night.

"After that he had no more trouble. They obeyed him without question, and reached their destination safely."

After the return to Mexico with the chiefs there were more councils. Every effort was made to bring in representatives of the Lipans and Mescaleros. The Pottawatomies already were present in force. At last one of the Lipans attended a council. Before it was over he suddenly rose and left, stole a horse and rode rapidly away. Neither he nor any of his tribe, nor none of the Mescaleros, could be persuaded to return.

In the end the Kickapoos promised to move, but despite offer of safe conduct through Texas, declined to go that way. They said they would march west of Texas





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and on to their reservation. At that the commissioners had to be satisfied.

Thereafter a considerable shipment of food and other necessary supplies was made from the United States and was held up on the border for payment of duties. The commissioners reported that the sum of seven thousand dollars in gold was demanded by the Mexican customs officials. There was more delay. At last, it having been shown that no supplies were being shipped from the United States that could be obtained in Mexico within a reasonable distance, orders came through from Mexico City to pass the shipment.

In the end all of the Pottawatomies with about 480 Kickapoos marched as they promised. The combined band was estimated at 600. They arrived at their destinations without particular incident. Then the commissioners, accompanied by a few chiefs, again visited San Antonio where the captives were liberated and sent north to join the others.

The work was not finished. It was late in 1875 that a report of the Sac and Fox Agency, Indian Territory, told of the arrival of another band. It is dated "Ninth-month 10, 1875." It reads in part:

"That portion of the Mexican Kickapoo tribe which, under the successful negotia-





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tions of Special Commissioners Atkinson and Williams, started from Mexico in Fourth-month, 1875, arrived here in Seventhmonth following without the loss of a single person except an infant which was born on the road. \* \* \* They report the number still remaining in Mexico to be about 100."

An earlier official report includes an excuse for opposing the removal of the tribes from Mexico, also from the Sac and Fox Agency. It is in part: "The Kickapoos are a portion of those who, about twenty-five years ago, separated from the tribes then in Illinois and emigrated to the Indian Territory, thence to Mexico, which country has since afforded a safe retreat from justice after raiding on the Texas frontier. A special commission last year visited them in Mexico and succeeded in securing their removal to Indian Territory, and their location on the North Fork of the Canadian River, notwithstanding much opposition on the part of the Mexicans, who claimed them as protection from the Mescaleros and Lipans."

Thus the chapter finally was closed, the commissioners receiving on all sides congratulations for having handled a delicate and dangerous situation so carefully and successfully.





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## CHAPTER XI

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"After my father had finished his work as Indian Commissioner," remembers Mrs. James, "he was requested to be one of the Judges from the State of Texas at the great Centennial at Philadelphia which celebrated the century, 1776-1876. He was one of two to be invited from Texas. He was away about six months. In recognition of his services he was honored by being presented with a gift of bronze.

"After that he was offered a position as United States investigator of claims in the states of Missouri, Arkansas and Illinois. We moved to St. Louis and were happily situated at 3511 Lindell Avenue where we rented a furnished home. But we were there only from April to September. My mother's health precluded our staying longer. And we were too homesick to stay away from Texas so we came back to Austin.

"I remember an incident of our stay in





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St. Louis that made a great impression upon me. Across the street from where we lived was a beautiful home which had a group of lilac trees in full bloom. My dear mother who was sick would look over there, the lilacs reminding her of her old home in Hanover County, Virginia.

"One day my father went across the street, rang the doorbell and asked for a few lilac blossoms for his sick wife. When he came back he could hardly walk because he was carrying so many lovely flowers, given to him gladly without price.

"At Austin my father had made a previous investment in a newspaper. Returning to Texas he took charge of it and edited it for a time. Meanwhile we were renting our home on Soledad Street to Major Placidus Ord, a brother of General Ord who was then commanding officer at San Antonio. When my father sold his paper and we came back home Major Ord almost had to buy a house into which to move because rent houses were so scarce.

"At Austin my sister May and I went to the Austin Academy owned by Helen Kirby. She was one of the great women of her profession, so beloved that her funeral took place from the capitol at Austin. Her influence while she was dean of women at the University of Texas was outstanding.





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"At last we were back in the house where I was born, and afterwards from which I was married."

Referring to social affairs in San Antonio Mrs. James says: "My father was a member of the Army and Civilian Social Club. They held beautiful balls at the Menger Hotel. My sister Fanny's first ball was given in honor of General MacKenzie and it was at that ball she wore her first train. The dress was rose-colored and was laced down the back with silk cords. I was given the great honor of lacing her up and while doing so I was overwhelmed with the grandeur of everything. I said in a weak voice, 'Fanny, do you think General MacKenzie will dance with you tonight?'

"My father did not wait for a reply but said, 'General MacKenzie will be indeed honored if he can secure one dance with my daughter.'

"I was at the ball at the Menger given in honor of General Treviño of Mexico City on the occasion of the announcement of his engagement. His bride-to-be was lovely Bertie Ord, daughter of General E. O. C. Ord. She was one of my sister Fanny's bridesmaids.

"General Treviño came to San Antonio with his entire staff. The ball was a brilliant, never-to-be-forgotten scene with cham-





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pagne flowing like water. Later Miss Ord married her General and went to Mexico City.

"There have been so many notable marriages of San Antonio girls to army officers stationed here that it has rightly given the city the name of being the 'mother-in-law of the army.'

"All of the balls and parties of those days were at the Menger. Four generations of my family have danced in the ball room of that famous hotel. I myself was the first lady chairman of the Pioneer ball and enjoyed it beyond measure, leading the grand march with the president of the Pioneer Society, Frank H. Bushick. As I swung around the room I saw so many dear and familiar faces of friends who held out their hands to me as I passed."

Social customs in the earlier days of San Antonio were quite different from those of modern times. For example, nobody then ever dreamed of buying flowers to send in honor of someone who had died.

Mrs. James recalls the death of Mrs. Franklin L. Paschal, mother of the elder Doctor Frank Paschal and grandmother of Doctors Frank and George who are now practicing their profession in San Antonio.

"My mother was overcome with grief," Mrs. James says. "In those days we did not





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buy flowers to be given in honor of the dear ones. My mother sent me, a little girl of twelve, to Mrs. Nat Lewis' home for flowers for Mrs. Paschal.

"The old Lewis homestead still stands at the corner of Lexington and North St. Marys Street. It is now the home of Mr. and Mrs. Leroy Denman. There was no bridge across the river at Lexington Avenue and Fifth Street then. All that acreage belonged to Mr. Lewis. On one side was a wonderful orchard which occupied the ground where now stands the First Baptist Church.

"The front entrance then was on North St. Marys Street and that was where I went in through the gate to tell Mrs. Lewis about Mrs. Paschal's death and to ask her for flowers.

"It was a sweet summer morning when I went up the wide pleasant walk to the front gallery of that fine old home. I was always a timid child. It was with real sorrow and tears in my eyes that I knocked at the front door. Dear Mrs. Lewis opened the door herself to see me standing there. I managed, through my sobs, to tell her what had happened and to deliver my mother's message.

"She too burst into tears and we stood together crying over the passing of an angel lady. Then she got her scissors and basket





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and we went together down the walk where the roses bloomed so beautifully on each side. She cut and put into the basket the most beautiful of her roses until we reached the gate. Then she kissed me goodbye and handed me the basket of roses to take to my mother with her love. My mother received them with tear-dimmed eyes and made them into a lovely wreath.

"Mr. and Mrs. Nat Lewis were such lovely friends of my father and mother. From this wonderful orchard were handed to our front door big blue buckets full of excellent peaches. Mother put them where we could reach them without difficulty. Today it seems I never have tasted such grand fruit. The juice ran down my hands and arms.

"On some afternoons during the summer Mrs. Lewis would invite all of us children to her home. We would see the boats with young colored boys taking huge baskets across the river to gather peaches. Then we would have a grand feast. The kindness and sweetness of Mr. and Mrs. Lewis lingers in my memory to this day.

"Mrs. John D. Groesbeck, who lived in a beautiful home on Dwyer Avenue, also was a very charming and kind friend of my mother. When Mrs. Groesbeck came to see Mother we clustered at her feet so as not to lose a word of her delightful conversation.





"She had three sons, all older than myself and my sister, May. Her son, J. Norton, married a lovely lady, Miss Lydia, a graduate of Vassar, whose home was in Stephenville, Texas. The next son, Henry, was a delightful gentleman who never married. Charlie, the youngest of the three, was deaf from childhood. He was given every advantage in education, being sent to a splendid school in the North where he learned to talk and to read lips. He was noted for winning every game he played. At casino, croquet and parcheesi no one could beat him.

"A circus came to town one day. It advertised as one of its leading attractions that a huge electric light would hang in a window.

"Charlie said he did not care about the elephants, lions or the charming young men on the flying trapeze. What he wanted to see was that electric light. One never had been seen in San Antonio before and therefore it was a mystery to us all.

"Charles was taken ill one time and Mrs. Groesback asked Mother if I could spend the night with her as she was alone with her sick child. She just wanted someone to speak to during the long night, so Mother let me go. The next morning very early Mrs. Groesbeck woke me to say that the milkman had failed to come and she had no milk for





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Charlie. She asked me to go across the street to Mrs. W. A. Bennett's, the mother of Mrs. B. F. Yoakum and Sam Bennett, for some milk.

"Mrs. Bennett also was a dear friend of my mother and was my Sunday School teacher. I got up at once and dressed. Mrs. Groesbeck gave me a pitcher to get the milk. She knew Mrs. Bennett would have some as she had a fine cow. I went up the walk through the beautiful wrought iron gates and up the wide marble steps to the door where I timidly knocked.

"The door was opened by the colored butler. I gave him Mrs. Groesbeck's message to Mrs. Bennett and he invited me in. I was ushered into a large library with so many books all around the room in perfect order. The room was bright and cheery in the early morning and a fine fire burned in the grate. I sat down in one of the comfortable chairs and looked around. To this day that room, cheerful and sunny in the brightness of early morning, stands out in my memory.

"The butler soon returned with the pitcher filled with fresh milk for little Charles, with Mrs. Bennett's love. The butler helped me down the shining steps and through the gate with the pitcher, which was very heavy. The rest of the way I made safely with no spilt





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milk to cry over. Mrs. Groesbeck thanked me very much, greatly pleased in having some milk for her sick child.

"Mrs. Groesbeck had many beautiful things in her home. Among them was a pair of candle shades which were a sheer delight to me. They were in the parlor on a side table. The shades were etched in grapes and grape leaves and were a joy to behold. Whenever I went to see Mrs. Groesbeck I always asked permission to go in and look at them. I would stand and gaze and gaze, and sometimes put out a timid hand to touch them.

"All my life I have wanted a pair of candle shades, but that dream never has been realized. I have many other beautiful things in my old homestead, but the candle shades are not there. Perhaps they will be in my dream boat when it comes in.

"One afternoon late, long afterwards, there was a knock at my front door. I happened to have my only son, John, who was about one and a half years old, in my arms. Of course I thought he was perfectly grand and beautiful.

"When I opened the door Mrs. Yoakum was standing there. She was so overcome by the sight of my son that she almost forgot what she came to my home for. She had come to invite me to a card party she was





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giving the next day. I accepted with pleasure.

“The next day when I got to Mrs. Bennett’s—Mrs. Yoakum was visiting at her mother’s home at the time—I found myself the center of quite a confusion over my son. Mrs. Yoakum had told everybody about him.

“Mrs. Judge Paschal, who lived on Soledad Street, was a dear friend of my mother and father. She had two sons, one of them was Judge Thomas A. Paschal of the Thirty-sixth District Court. The other was Emmet. There was a little sister, Flora, who died in early childhood.

“I remember how we used to play together, Flora and I, and when she died her mother brought us many of her toys and dresses and little socks which we considered almost holy.

“Mrs. Paschal was noted for her beautiful gardens. Her hands with flowers seemed like magic. Everything she touched grew.

“Judge Tom Paschal married Miss Florida Mayes, a lovely lady. Emmet married a dear friend of mine, Miss Mattie Kinney of Austin. Mattie would come over to visit with my sister and me. During one of those visits I introduced her to Emmet who called one evening to see us. He fell deeply in



Given the very day, I counted and five  
 six

The next day when I was in the  
 not a day. I had been in the  
 mother's house in the town - I had been  
 the center of a great excitement and the  
 Mrs. Yarnall had been married about  
 five

Mrs. Judge's husband was born in 1810  
 and lived in a small town in the  
 and later. The first time I saw him  
 was in 1840. I was in the  
 thirty-year-old house. I was then  
 married. I was with a little girl  
 who had a very interesting

I remember how we went to play in  
 better place and I had seen it. And the  
 mother began to talk to me. I was  
 alone and she said, "We will be married  
 almost now."

Mrs. Packer was called for her service  
 in the garden. The house of the family seemed  
 like magic. Everything she touched grew  
 Judge Tom Packer returned from Florida  
 May, a lovely day. I was married a  
 day later of Mrs. Mrs. Packer of  
 Anna. After that I was sent to live  
 with my mother and my. Young one of those  
 years I mentioned in the house and lived  
 one evening to see me. He did simply as

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love with her immediately. He asked her to take a boat ride.

"It was a rule of my father's that no one was to keep a boat out longer than one hour. It must be back at the landing in that time. Emmet took Mattie riding and was back on time, but he proposed marriage just as he was bringing the boat in. She refused him so he kept the boat out in the water hoping that she would change her mind. When she did not he was compelled to bring the boat to the mooring and help her out.

"She returned to her home in Austin a few days after that. Some time later, a few days before Valentine's day, I met Mr. Paschal on Soledad Street. In the meantime I had received a letter from Mattie saying she had received a most beautiful valentine postmarked San Antonio and she had an idea it was from Mr. Emmet Paschal. She wound up her letter by saying, 'Maria, do you think Mr. Paschal really loves me?'

"When I met Emmet I told him about the letter and Mattie telling me of her beautiful valentine and also about her asking me if I thought he loved her. He became very serious and asked me to write to Miss Mattie and tell her that he loved her with all his heart and soul.

"I wrote to Mattie immediately and on the very next train she came over for a





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visit. It was then the engagement took place.

"I was asked, of course, to be one of the bridesmaids but I could not. They were married in Austin but came to San Antonio to live. Mr. Paschal's mother had their home furnished and gave them a beautiful banquet. All of her cut glass, china, silver and everything made for festive occasions were brought out. There were huge cut glass bowls of calves' jelly, boneless ham, boneless turkey, and champagne that had been put away at the time of his christening to be opened at his wedding. The elite of San Antonio was present for the occasion together with the entire Bar of the city.

"My dear Emmet would often say to me in fun, 'Maria, when I am perfectly miserable I like to think about that time.' But there never was a happier couple than Mr. and Mrs. Emmet Paschal.

"Her kindness and charity were beyond words to express. She worked with rich and poor alike. She loved little children but had none of her own. When I would hear of some of the beautiful things she was doing I would say, 'Mattie, your crown is going to be so grand, so brilliant and so beautiful that I won't be able to get anywhere near you. You will be far removed from me.'





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"The eldest of Mrs. Tom Paschal's children was Natalie. She married in the army. Another, Pauline, married Mr. William Benson and lived abroad for many years, in China and other remote parts of the world. There were two sons, but I was not acquainted with them.

"One evening, in the summer of 1883, we were all sitting on the front porch of our Soledad Street home when the gate opened, the latch making its usual noise. Coming down the front walk was a man.

"We did not recognize him at first in the light that streamed out in front of the house. Then my father said, 'Mr. John James.' "



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## CHAPTER XII

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"Of course we were all glad to see Mr. James," said Mrs. James. "My father and mother took charge of entertaining him while we girls sat quietly by. There was delightful talk of travel and reading.

"When Mr. James left he said he would come again to see us. He was by no means a stranger because his family and mine had been friends for years, ever since my father's days at Indianola where he became so well acquainted with Mr. and Mrs. Milby, Mr. James' grandparents.

"In about a week he called again. He did not make any engagement but dropped in, casually. It seemed he was calling on us all.

"At the breakfast table one morning my father made what seemed to me an astonishing statement, for the benefit of my sister May and myself, of course. He said Mr. James was a confirmed bachelor. He was





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about thirty at that time and my father said he never would marry."

Mrs. James strongly suspected he was calling more on her sister May, whom she considered the beauty of the family, than upon anyone else. She did not consider herself especially pretty.

It was not until her sister related an incident that occurred in her absence that she realized it was herself in whom the young attorney was interested.

"One evening I had been invited to a dance at the Casino Club by Mr. Walters Davis, a young lawyer and son of Governor E. J. Davis," Mrs. James explained. "Mr. James came to call after I had left and was told by my mother where I had gone and with whom I went."

The rest of the incident was related by her sister, May, after she returned. Mrs. James remembers the conversation was something like this:

Mrs. Williams said to Mr. James, "Mr. Davis is a very handsome young man, isn't he?"

"I don't know that he is," Mr. James replied quite scornfully.

"I know my daughter and Mr. Davis will be the most handsome couple at the party this evening," Mrs. Williams persisted.





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To which Mr. James retorted, "No one there will be as pretty as Maria."

After which Mrs. Williams excused herself, leaving Mr. James to be entertained by Miss May.

"My sister found the task of entertaining him very difficult indeed that night," remembers Mrs. James. "My sister told his fortune with cards and when the queen of hearts turned out to be May he said, 'Cards lie, May.'"

"It was the only ugly word she ever heard him say. And it was the first intimation the Williams family had that Mr. James had fallen in love with Maria Williams.

"He kept calling at the house but he never made any dates with me. He said later that he never courted his wife by means of the Harnisch and Baer ice cream parlor. He would come two or three times a week.

"My sister and I were invited to visit General Tom Green's daughter at Colorado City, Texas. While there I was surprised to receive a letter from Mr. James in which he made a formal proposal of marriage. He said he hoped that I would have a happy visit, that I would not stay away too long, and that I would not get myself engaged. He wrote after he had called at the house and been told where we girls had gone.

"His dear mother was the first person he





told about it. When we returned she wrote me a note saying that John, who had been sick, would be around as soon as the doctor would permit it.

"Speaking of my dear mother-in-law, she told a friend that I was absolutely perfect, that she would not change a hair of my head. I have wished so many times that more young girls, in marrying into a family, would try to make their husband's people their own people. Often it would mean a new heaven and a new earth.

"Mr. James and I became engaged on November 26, 1883, and were married on February 26, 1884.

"Weddings in those days had to be very early. There was only one train a day leaving San Antonio then, and it left very early. In order to take that train it was necessary to hold the wedding about six o'clock in the morning by candlelight. We were married in the old home on Soledad Street. I was born in one room and was married in another.

"After a month's wedding tour we returned to my new home here at 514 Camaron Street. I have only really lived in two houses in all my life. I have spent fifty-three years in my new home and there all my children and several of my grandchildren were born."

The young bride enjoyed exceedingly the





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wedding tour. They paid a visit to New Orleans and Mobile and then went to Washington. They spent some time among her relatives in and near Richmond. On their way home they stopped at Louisville and St. Louis.

"When my husband and I went to Richmond on our bridal tour we were the guests of Uncle Sam and his beloved family," Mrs. James says. "Aunt Caroline was so overjoyed at seeing me again she took occasion to celebrate with some of the red wine from the old cut glass decanter on the sideboard. Dinner, one may imagine, was long delayed. In fact it was several hours late. My husband was accustomed to a one o'clock dinner and he waited impatiently for it to be served.

"The next day, fearing a similar delay, he took dinner with my cousin, Dean Maury, at the Westmoreland Club, a very exclusive club. On returning he found dinner at Uncle Sam's was served promptly, an excellent dinner, and he was entirely without appetite.

"My husband was attorney for a Mr. Christian of Richmond and had been for a number of years. While on our wedding tour he found he had transacted enough business for his client so that his fees more than covered the cost of our entire wedding trip of a month and a day."

Coming back to San Antonio the bride





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did not even know where she would live. She knew a home was being provided but she never had seen it and did not even know where it was located.

"My dear father met us at the depot," says Mrs. James. "He asked John for our baggage checks as he had a carriage engaged. I kept looking out of the window to see where I was and where I was going. Finally there was a light, shining from a window, and then we were home.

"Our families were there to receive us. The table was set in our dining room and there the colored maid, Hattie, served us with turkey, ham and many other good things. Hattie was a treasure. She lived with me for nearly three years."

Mrs. James remembers that one morning shortly after her return she decided some washing must be done, but learned there were no tubs. That lack being remedied she purchased a market basket, only to learn it was "large enough for a hotel."

During the summer she busied herself with preserving and pickling, following the recipes of her aunts in Virginia. Her first attempts were at agarita jelly. Whole bushes loaded with the berries were brought in.

"Such a time we had getting the berries off," Mrs. James says. "I had to put on kid gloves to protect my hands."





Then she cooked the jelly too much and it became so hard it would not spread properly. But her young husband proudly labeled the bottles and put them away on a shelf where, with his bride, they would count them and admire them. Then the young husband wrote his mother-in-law to tell her what a splendid housekeeper the daughter was.

A graphic picture of that home and of its mistress is told in a recent letter to Mrs. James' daughter, Mrs. Sigismund Engelking (Annie Laura James). The letter is from Dora Neill Raymond, Goddaughter of Mrs. James and daughter of Judge H. H. Neill, one of Judge James' associates on the bench of the Fourth Court of Civil Appeals.

The letter tells its own story. It reads:

"Dear Annie:—It is difficult to put into words—and words that may appear upon a printed page—all that your mother, my Godmother, has been to me, and, of course, quite impossible to put it into 'just a line,' as you request. I think, though, that were I asked what word my Godmother suggested, I could say that word at once. It would be 'home.'

"You know that until I was in my late 'teens, I did not have a home in San Antonio, and I left the one in El Paso when I was such a tiny toddler my memory of it is





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very slight. So the home on Camaron Street, or wherever my Godmother might be—in summer residence in Waring or Boerne—has helped to make me understand what, in maturity, appears to me the greatest source of strength of our country and of England. I know that it takes more than one to make a home, and my father's colleague, the Chief Justice, most splendidly did his part, and you and Mary, Helen and John did theirs, but it was my Godmother who was ever the gentle presiding genius of the place.

“A home then, to my thinking, is of a charming, rambling architecture with rooms generous in dimension, full of sunlight and good Texas air. Its kitchen is a very busy one with an Aunt Charity in it, and it sends forth fragrant harbingers of good things to come at meal time. In the bedrooms there is a quiet privacy for sleep or sewing or the exchange of girlhood confidences. No radios obtrude into such havens their noisy clamor and one telephone is considered enough for all the household. In front and back are galleries, not the little porches and verandas of harsh climates. And around the house there is a great deal of yard—north, south, east, west—room for Japanese lanterns on gay festal nights, and near the stable hospitable spaces for guinea pig pens or cages for 'possums or whatever furred or feathered





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friends a nature-loving son has found unsuited as companions of the bedchamber.

"It is a place for anniversaries, this home—weddings, birthdays, and for a ritualistic hallowing of Easter, Christmas and New Years. It could be very gay. I remember how happy everyone was at your wedding. I had been allowed to come back from the University to be one of your bridesmaids and had, then my first taste of champagne.

"But I don't remember that ever anyone told, in that home, a story that was off-color. And I don't remember that ever I heard scandal there. And so the portrait of your military grandfather was never made to frown or come tumbling down on us in merited rebuke.

"Once I was so fortunate as to be my Godmother's guest for the Christmas holidays and remember that eggnog of a Southern richness was brought by Tessa before we left our bedrooms, that we went soon after to the parlor to see the Christmas tree. It was a very opulent one and stood in the same place where I had seen each of the others in earlier years. Presents were not opened until Christmas morning nor carried to friends in town until that day. There was a certain ritual that gave dignity to all occasions, and yet had nothing of the formality that goes with ostentation.





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"All of it, I think, reflected the Virginia tradition in which your mother had been reared, and was blended with the more genial kindness and keener zest and tolerance of a gentlewoman who was proudly a pioneer of Texas.

"She had, and has, that courtesy that comes from the heart, and so inspires sweet acts that could never be provided for by the most far-sighted of the arbiters of etiquette. I remember hearing Mother tell of how once when she and Mrs. James went calling together, she had forgotten her gloves, and that my Godmother, seeing the omission, at once removed her own and tucked them out of sight.

"Home meant a place enriched by the memories of such daily gentle acts. It was a place where there would be period furniture, the period being that of the family: A Tyler sideboard that once had graced the White House, a bedroom set that had been given when a daughter attained young ladyhood, a crystal lamp purchased to grace a debut party—all living quite happily together and speaking so eloquently of the beauty of other days as to condition the good taste of every later acquisition.

"You'll be discontented with this I fear, Annie, because it tells of a home rather than its lovely and loving owner. But I am sit-





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ting in a New York apartment with the noise of First Avenue coming up to me through a large window with Venetian blinds that let me see the ships that enter New York by way of East River. Perhaps if I were midstream in that river on a miraculously quiet night or, perhaps, if the verger would let me take pen and paper into the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. I could write of your mother, my Godmother. But here and now I can only say that I love her deeply, and acknowledge myself as most unworthy of her benison of love and understanding.

“Affectionately yours,

(Signed). “DORA NEILL RAYMOND

“5 Prospect Place, New York City

“April 17, 1937.”

Mrs. Raymond occupies the chair in the department of history at Sweet Briar and is the author of several historical books. She often visits in San Antonio.

Mrs. James remembers in those first days of her marriage, her husband bought for her three huge langshang chickens, a rooster and two hens. He paid seven dollars for the trio. It was more than a year later when her first daughter, Annie, was teething, that Doctor Adolph Herff prescribed chicken broth for the child. Aunt Charity, who was





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nurse and maid in the family for thirty-two years, made the broth.

"I sat with Annie on a pillow on my lap," Mrs. James says. "Aunt Charity was on the floor at my feet with her broth and spoon. I whispered to ask her what chicken she had killed. She told me it was the old black rooster and explained she thought the older and stronger the rooster, the quicker Annie would get well!"

It was only five days before the birth of her first child that Mrs. James lost her father. He died on January 22, 1885, after a very short illness. The incidents of a few days later showed, as compared to modern days, how unbelievably innocent both the young people were.

"I awoke early in the night," Mrs. James explains, "not feeling at all well. I did not say anything at the time as I did not wish to disturb my husband. But finally I was compelled to wake him and tell him I was sick.

"He asked immediately what I had eaten for supper and then urged me to be more careful. Then he turned over and went back to sleep. But I was unable to go to sleep and kept feeling worse, so I awakened him again and suggested that he light a candle and look through a medical book called 'The Wife and Mother.' It was a book we women referred to often.





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"So John took the book and very carefully flipped through page after page. Then suddenly he closed the book and turning to me said with finality, 'There isn't anything in this book that touches your case.'"

"If he had only known it there were few things in that book but what were applicable to my case!

"He mildly suggested a hot foot bath, and as that was all I knew to do he called the maid, Hattie, and she brought in everything she needed and helped me with it. I remember she looked anxious but didn't say anything. She was afraid to speak.

"We waited until daylight and then I sent for my dear next-door neighbor, Mrs. Navarro, who had offered to come if I ever needed her. It did not take her long to tell my husband in rapid Spanish what was needed. She instructed him to send immediately for Doctor Herff and a nurse. The nurse was Aunt Susan."

Some hours later the first of Mrs. James' children was born.

"Aunt Susan was the cream of nurses," says Mrs. James. "She was a colored woman of fine manner and very efficient. In order to have her it was necessary to write your name in her book months before she was needed otherwise one had very little chance of getting her. I never saw such a manner





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and management on the part of anyone in my life.

"She was with me with three of my children and the only reason she was not there with the fourth was because she and Aunt Charity did not get along and Aunt Charity said she would quit if Aunt Susan ever set foot in the house again."

Because Aunt Charity had become almost as much a part of the household as any member of the family, Mrs. James dispensed with the services of Aunt Susan and kept the other for many years.

In the early years of her married life Mrs. James devoted herself wholeheartedly to raising her children.

"What a joy it has been," she exclaims, "rearing my children in this old home, although I have spent half of the last fifty-three years a widow alone. Looking back over my life I feel I have been greatly sheltered and rich in dear and loyal friends."

She has remembered and passed on to her children and grandchildren some of the ideals and maxims of her husband, the late Judge James.

"In selecting the philosophy to instill in my children and grandchildren," she says, "I had as a guiding light outstanding words of my husband. 'Maria, never step down,' he would say. And again, 'You have been





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tempted if you have been approached near enough to make a refusal.'

"During one of my trips to Washington I visited the magnificent Congressional library. In one section there are beautiful mottoes in bronze placed at intervals around the rotunda. One of them particularly attracted me. It was, 'As one lamp lighteth another and the light is not diminished, so nobleness enkindeth nobleness.'

"In the close contact I have maintained with my grandchildren I have explained this beautiful inscription which is enshrined in my memory. Last year when my granddaughter, Helen Adelle, went to Virginia to college at Randolph Macon, where her mother graduated, they passed through Washington. She went to the Congressional library and never rested until she had found the bronze tablet. When she was back in school she wrote me immediately about hunting for it and then quoted it in her letter.

"I feel that I have been more than blessed by the exquisite texture of the spirituality of my children and grandchildren. My granddaughter, Helen Cayloma, came to me in Boerne on her bridal night. I was sick in bed. She brought me her beautiful bouquet of valley lilies and laid it on my breast.

"The strange thing about it was that I knew she was going to do just that before





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she came. As she stood by my side holding my hands she said, 'Ama, what were the four things you taught us when we were little children?'

"As she stood there we began to enumerate them.

"Your word is as good as your bond.

"What is worth doing is worth doing well.

"When you put your hands to the plow, don't look back.

"Keep your feet in the narrow straight way that leads to everlasting life.

"I rejoiced when she said, 'I feel that I am a product of that training, and everything worth while that I ever have done is to be attributed to it.' "

Since all of her four children have reached maturity and have families of their own Mrs. James has been keenly interested in her eleven grandchildren.

As a matter of family history Mrs. James eldest daughter, Annie Laura, was married to Sigismund Engelking on October 20, 1907. They have four children, John James, born at El Paso; Marianna, also born at El Paso; Helen Cayloma, born in her great great grandmother's bed at the old homestead in San Antonio, and Sigismund (Bob), born at James Park near Comfort, Texas, July 17, 1915.

the same. The first thing I saw when I  
my hands were out. I was very much  
thing you might be able to see this  
children."

"We started then we began to move  
the same."

"You must be as good as dead then  
What is the matter with you?"

"I am not dead, but I am not  
any more."

"I am not dead, but I am not  
any more."

"I am not dead, but I am not  
any more."

"I am not dead, but I am not  
any more."

"I am not dead, but I am not  
any more."

"I am not dead, but I am not  
any more."

"I am not dead, but I am not  
any more."

"I am not dead, but I am not  
any more."

"I am not dead, but I am not  
any more."

"I am not dead, but I am not  
any more."

"I am not dead, but I am not  
any more."

"I am not dead, but I am not  
any more."



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Her son, John Alexander James, has one son, John James III.

Mrs. James' third child, Mary Greenhow James, was married on April 24, 1916, to Dr. Edwin Meredith Sykes. They have three children, Edwin Meredith, Jr.; Maria Margaret and John Herndon James Sykes.

Her youngest child, Helen Adelle James, was married August 12, 1917, to Elmer Charles de Montel. They have three children, Helen Adelle James, born at the old homestead; Annie Justine and Edmund Charles, both born at Wichita Falls, Texas.

"I was present at the birth of eight of the eleven grandchildren," comments Mrs. James, "and received them into my hands at the first possible moment. I was at the hospital with my daughter Mary when Edwin Meredith Sykes, Jr., was born, but when John Herndon came I had to stay at home with the other two.

"When John Alexander James, Jr., arrived I already had prepared a beautiful bassinet for him. It was brought from England by Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Giles. It already had been dressed a dozen times. Once it had been dressed in blue with dainty hand-made lace. The next time it was in pink with lace and ribbon trimmings.

"It had its small mattress, its little hand-



My son John Alexander James was born  
at John James.

My father (John James) was born  
James was married on April 24, 1838 to  
Elizabeth Alexander James. They have  
three children: John James, Elizabeth  
Alexander and John Alexander James.

The youngest child, John James,  
was married on June 15, 1857 to Mary  
Charles de Mott. They have one child,  
John James, who was born on the 11th  
of January, 1858. John James and Elizabeth  
Alexander have a daughter, Mary James.

I was present at the birth of my son  
the silver jubilee of my marriage. My  
James, and myself have been very happy at  
the last possible moment. I was at the  
end with my daughter Elizabeth when Elizabeth  
Alexander died. I was born, but when  
John Alexander was I had to stay at home  
with the other two.

When John Alexander James was 14-  
years old, he was given a business edu-  
cation. He was a very successful  
by the end of his school days. He always  
had been a good student. One day  
had been absent from school with a fever.  
He had been absent from school with a fever.  
He had been absent from school with a fever.  
He had been absent from school with a fever.

It had an effect on his health.

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embroidered sheets and pillow cases and tiny hand-made quilts.

"In speaking of quilts I may safely say I have made a hundred. One day a friend asked me just how many baby quilts I had made. I replied that counting my children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews and the first born of dear friends, then multiply that number by two, would give about the right number.

"Two little quilts that Mrs. William Negley made for Albert Sidney Negley were things of rare charm. Mrs. Negley would come to my house and together we would make quilts. One day as we sat down to work Mrs. Negley said, 'Maria, you take one side of the quilt from the center and I will take the other.' I said I thought I would do my side in curves and she said she would do her side in squares.

"We did not know then that we could roll the quilt back and keep it firm on the frame so as we neared the center it was very hard work, with one hand underneath and the other on top. I nearly stood on my head for the last few stitches. All the quilting work I did was in buff and blue of our Colonial days.

"They were happy days at Oak Park, at Waring, with Mrs. Negley."





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## CHAPTER XIII

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Judge John Herndon James was born on October 13, 1852, the son of John James and his wife, Annie Milby. He grew up in San Antonio.

His father had erected, in 1847, at 231 West Commerce Street, what was one of the first two-story structures in the then little city. The lot extended north to the San Antonio River covering ground now occupied by the Western Union, Casino Club, Presa and Crockett streets, etc.

The Judge's mother, whom his widow often refers to as having such a beautiful character, was married when she was sixteen years of age. She died in San Antonio in 1901, having spent most of her life a resident of the growing city.

John Herndon James was her first child. Together with his brother, next in age, Thomas Milby James, he was sent to Earlham College, a Quaker institution in Rich-





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mond, Indiana. Afterward he attended Harvard at Cambridge, Massachusetts, graduating there in law in the class of 1873.

He returned to San Antonio and became, with Judge I. P. Simpson, a member of the law firm of Simpson and James, practicing his profession until 1893. In that year the Fourth Court of Civil Appeals was created and Judge James was named by Governor Hogg as its first Chief Justice. He held that office until his death on July 17, 1912.

With him on this bench were Judges W. S. Fly, who became Chief Justice when Judge James died, and H. H. Neill.

It was said of Judge James that "he was a man of high character and splendid attainments and as a citizen, a member of the bar and as Chief Justice he was greatly respected for his ability, his fairness and his impartiality in all his dealings, official and otherwise."

It was only four years after his graduation from Harvard that Judge James was faced with a heavy task. On November 26, 1877, his father died. The eldest son, together with his mother, was named executor of an estate which consisted for the most part in large holdings of West Texas lands and property in San Antonio.

Judge James at that time was only twenty-five years of age. Yet he was able to





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meet the emergency so well that, as one historian puts it, "on account of the great service he rendered in the able handling of his father's estate \* \* \* his heirs are enjoying the fruits of their ancestor's industry, made possible only by the wonderful capabilities of his executor, John Herndon James."

The character of the elder James who, as a boy of sixteen had started from his Nova Scotia home for the purpose of helping Texas free itself from the tyranny of Mexico, is reflected in a last letter to his son. It was written a little more than three weeks before his death. It shows that he knew he was dying.

It placed upon the son's shoulders not only responsibility for a large estate, but care for a big family, many of whom still were minors. The letter is as follows:

"San Antonio, 2nd Nov., 1877.

"My dear Son John:—The chances are that before many days I shall bid goodbye to this world, and not having made any disposition of my estate I now desire you to draw up my will. Your mother owns the house and furniture in her own right, given her before marriage, and of course her half the community property acquired since marriage.

"I want each child to have an equal part of my estate, except yourself and Tom who have received, say \$3,000 in your education





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which the others have not received. I want all the children educated as well as possible.

"I want the family kept together for several years, so the children can be provided for and educated. It falls heartily upon you, my Son, to accept more than a Father's duty to your brothers and sisters. Your Mother I want united with you as executor. Your position will require firmness, but you must bear and forbear with all those growing up. The income from property will partly support the expense. I want you to have full power to sell and your Mother joining with you can pass title to property. In case any of the boys and girls marry they are to be assisted if possible, on account of what they are entitled to receive. Sell the landed property (there is much that is valuable) as fast as fair prices can be got. Taxes otherwise will destroy it.

"Draw up the will with care so everything possible can be kept out of the probate court.

"As to the future—I do not fear it, nor do I fear death. I have nearly lived out my time anyhow. The pain is in leaving a young and dependent family upon your hands, but I do not doubt that you will do the best you can for them. If you do not, God help them.

(Signed) "JOHN JAMES."





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At the time of the father's death there were eight children younger than the son who was named executor. The youngest was only two years old. Such was the task set before the young lawyer.

It was a comparable event when Judge James died in 1912. His only son, John Alexander James, was then but twenty-three years old, and it fell to him to take much the same responsibility his father had taken at a similar age. He, also, has handled his trust faithfully and well.

There was much of hardy blood behind the James men, much of foresightedness and understanding to fit them for responsibility.

The first James to come to Texas arrived in 1837 and faced the rigors of a wild and Indian infested country. In spite of that, as surveyor, he made long trips into the open country and on several occasions was involved with skirmishes with hostile Indians.

In 1854 he accompanied his own herd of cattle on the long trek to California when Texas cattle men were finding a favorable market for their beef stock there. The experiences on that trip were set down in a diary of James G. Bell, who accompanied the herd. The diary is in the possession of John A. James. It afterward was published in the Southwestern Historical Quarterly and later published in book form, having been edited





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by J. Evetts Haley and copyrighted by Ned C. Bell.

Long marches between water holes, the tortuous winding of the old trail and sundry brushes with marauders are told by the diarist.

The route lay through Felipe Springs (Del Rio) to the Devil's River, up that stream and over several treacherous crossings to the Pecos basin, north to the vicinity of Escondido Springs, west to Comanche Springs, then to the Presidio on the Rio Grande River and up that stream to El Paso.

West of that the route lay through Guadalupe Pass and through Santa Cruz, the trail bending south across a part of northern Sonora and reaching the (now) United States at Teuson (Tucson). From there it lay west to the Gila River and down that stream, crossing it many times, across the Colorado, through Fort Yuma and San Felipe to end at San Diego.

Mr. James disposed of his cattle and revisited his old home in Nova Scotia, going by way of New York, before returning to San Antonio. He was gone seventeen months. During his absence Mrs. James with her little son, John Herndon, and her baby, Thomas Milby, stayed with her parents at Indianola.

Much has been published relative to the





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great cattle trails leading north from the wide Texas plains, but comparatively little has been written about the trails west. The first drive to be taken west was either in 1848 or 1849. Thereafter quite a number of cattle men drove their beef stock west to dispose of it in the fast growing gold country. The industry continued until interrupted by the war and was revived for a few years after the close of the war.

It was, therefore, the spirit of the hardy pioneers which had been inherited by Judge James, together with the excellent education his father insisted he should have, which helped make him the greatly esteemed and respected citizen and jurist—that and, of course, his early training which included the sweet, high-spirited influence of his mother and the rugged honesty and courage of his father.

In later life it was said of Judge James that he would refuse to discuss any law case, even with intimate friends, for fear some time such a case might come before him in his official capacity. And there were numerous times when, as a matter of law and the facts, he was compelled to render decisions against some of those who were his personal friends. But matters of friendship never were allowed to carry weight with Judge James in cases in his court. His decisions



great cattle trade taking north from the  
wide Texas plains, but comparatively little  
has been written about the cattle west. The  
first drive to be taken west was made in  
1843 or 1844. The cattle were taken  
of cattle men drove them west to  
dispose of in the far growing gold fields.  
The industry continued until about  
1850, when the west was opened for a few  
years after the close of the war.

It was therefore the work of the early  
pioneers which was first suggested by Judge  
James Ogden and the cattle men. When  
his father suggested he should move west  
helped make him the cattle man and  
suggested to him to move west. It was  
therefore the early trading which included the  
great high-land industry of the cattle  
and the early industry and cattle of the  
cattle.

In 1845 the first west of Judge James  
that he would move to the west was the cattle  
even with cattle men. The cattle men  
that were a few cattle men who were in  
his official capacity. That the cattle men  
but that when he was a cattle man and the  
fact he was compelled to make. The cattle  
against some of those who were in the  
industry. But many of the cattle men  
were allowed to carry cattle with Judge  
James in case in the cattle. The cattle

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were based on the facts and law as he saw them. His opinions were clear and logical.

At his sudden death he was deeply mourned not only by his family but by a wide circle of friends.

Referring to his death Mrs. James says, "In the twilight on July 17 (1912), at the end of a happy summer day, my husband entered life more abundantly. He rested in my arms on the grass near our home (James Park near Comfort, Texas), suddenly taken from me. So through the years, now more than twenty-five, I have been a widow, alone, carrying on to the best of my ability in the way I know he wanted me to."



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## CHAPTER XIV

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Mrs. James remembers a host of interesting and amusing incidents that have happened to her, portions of a cherished past.

With her husband and children in 1891 she went for a time to Raleigh Springs. After leaving there Judge James decided to go on to New York and Boston and left his family at Harrisburg for the rest of the summer.

"Early in September," says Mrs. James, "I went to Washington to visit my sisters, Mrs. Gresham and Mrs. Settle. John joined me there later bringing beautiful gifts to each.

"Our son's first suit of clothes with pants came from Boston. He was then two years old. To me John brought an exquisite necklace from Tiffany's. It had been exhibited in their window and his mother had seen it. When John mentioned a gift for me she told him of this necklace. He immediately went down and bought it.





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"His mother always spent her summers in New York. She invited me and the children there to visit her but I thought it wiser not to take the little ones there during the summer weather. After a pleasant visit with my sisters in Washington we returned home.

"Somewhere in North Carolina the train stopped on a siding and the Pullman conductor informed my husband we would be there for two hours on account of a wreck ahead. So he and another gentleman went outside to walk up and down, and suddenly decided to look up a barber shop which they had been told was not far away.

"My husband came back to the car window where I sat with a baby on my lap and handed me all our tickets for San Antonio, remarking that it would be safer for me to have them as he was going down the street.

"He was barely out of sight when I realized the train was moving. It seemed to me it was not merely switching, but really starting toward home. Aunt Charity with John in her arms and I with Mary and Annie were looking about wildly to try to see my darling. Just as the train was gaining momentum we passed him and I could see that our waving and calling was taken with much disapproval.

"In a little while he appeared at my side and said, 'Maria, what do you mean by all





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this confusion? We have not started. They are just switching.'

"But I said, 'We are not switching but are on our way home.'

"And we were. No one had told me but I felt we had started. He took his seat and watched the passing scenery complacently and was very thankful after awhile that he had not been left behind as had the gentleman in the opposite section. At the first stop Mr. James received a telegram from this gentleman asking him please to take charge of his baggage.

"That same summer I was in Richmond. I was reading one of the Richmond newspapers about the epidemics the people had endured and to my surprise learned that just then, in 1891, there was an epidemic of diphtheria which was considered one of the worst of them all, and which had taken a large number of children.

"My cousin, Miss Sallie Greenhow, was there and when she came in that afternoon I asked her about the epidemic. Reluctantly she admitted there were some cases. She was going to Harrisburg and I asked her to engage board and rooms for me there. I was frightened and she became frightened also. She never took her hat off until she had a place for me to live and had telegraphed me to come.





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"So I was out of Richmond in thirty-six hours with my children. I saw nothing short of an act of Divine Providence in that matter.

"It was indeed a sad parting with my grandmother and as it happened I never saw her again as she died the following January. But we had escaped danger of contagion from diphtheria and I did not dare to risk my babies.

"As I was leaving Richmond at that time my grandmother asked me to accept, with her love and benediction, her rosewood and mahogany furniture. There were some beautiful blue vases, my father's diploma from West Point and a painting of my father and herself. Also there was my father's little chair which he had as a boy. The bed in which I am now resting and from which I am making this dictation is a part of that gift.

"When I returned to San Antonio Mrs. W. L. Simpson came to see me the next morning after my arrival and asked me to go to see her mother, Mrs. Carleton, at once as she was very sick and asking every day to see me. So, of course, that very afternoon I went to see my precious friend. We were so glad to see each other. One of the most beautiful things in my life has been the friendship of Mrs. Carleton. It so happened





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that was the last time I had the joy of seeing her as she died unexpectedly right after that.

"Summer of 1894 found me with my little family, Helen a baby, Mary 3, John 5 and Annie 8, in Kerrville, Texas. I was at the St. Charles Hotel under the care of the famous physician, Doctor E. E. Palmer, graduate of the University of Edinburgh, Scotland. He came to Texas and to Kerrville to locate in his early manhood. For him immediately were opened the doors and hearts of the people of Kerrville and the surrounding country. He was so gentle, so kind and such a splendid physician.

"I was among those who went to him that spring time at death's very door. I was taken desperately ill with what Doctor Herff called nursing sore mouth and it extended through my entire body, blood poisoning having set in.

"Doctor Herff told me that in his large practice he had had three such cases and two of them had died. My sister-in-law had a cottage in Kerrville that year and it was through her influence that my husband sent me and my children there. For five months I was at the St. Charles Hotel with two nurses, Aunt Charity and a Mrs. Brown, a practical nurse from Bandera. I was in bed so long I had to learn to walk afterwards.

"In having to wean my daughter we found





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no food to agree with her. Finally Doctor Palmer said that unless there was a decided change in her condition shortly, she could not live.

"There came to me the remembrance of having heard a friend tell about using the milk of a jenny for a baby. I asked Doctor Palmer what he thought about jenny's milk for my child. He said he never had used it in his practice, but was perfectly willing to try it.

"Upon inquiry we found there were no donkeys nearer to Kerrville than Bandera. We persuaded Mr. Russell to ride over to Bandera on horseback to the ranch of Policarpo Rodriguez where we were told there were many donkeys. When Mr. Russell tried to negotiate for the purchase or lease of a jenny Mr. Rodriguez was very pronounced in his rejection of any proposal for the removal of any of his donkeys. They were not for sale, he said most emphatically.

"Then, in an offhand way, he asked whose baby it was for. When he was told it was for the infant of Judge John H. James of San Antonio he threw up his hands. He said, 'Take every one if they are for him. Not a cent of money.'

"It happened that Judge James' father had surveyed for Policarpo Rodriguez and they were very fond of each other. So a





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good jenny was selected and was brought to Kerrville to be stabled across the street. Mrs. Brown went over and milked the jenny every time the baby needed a fresh bottle, and my baby lived. She began by taking just a little and slowly increasing the amount.

"Looking back on the summer it seems the kindness of the Kerrville people was much more than was to be expected, and to this day, after forty-three years, I pay tribute to their loveliness to me.

"Mrs. Charles Schreiner would send me, several times during the week, lovely flowers from her own garden. People would stop Aunt Charity when she walked out on the street with the children to ask about me.

"Mrs. Richard Galbreith, wife of the rector of St. Peter's Church, would come two or three times a week to read to me and when my little son, John, had his fifth birthday he had two birthday cakes, one made by Mrs. Lee Mason, who was the owner of the St. Charles Hotel, and which was decorated with five candles. The other was from Mrs. Palmer, wife of my Doctor.

"During the summer the ladies of St. Peters Church gave a sale of work on the lawn of the St. Charles Hotel."

In connection with this sale there was an election of the most beloved lady in Kerrville. To Mrs. James' great surprise she





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received the honor and with it a beautiful hand-painted picture which she has kept ever since and treasures very much.

"Mrs. Schreiner's young daughters," continues Mrs. James, "Misses Lena, Minnie and Fanny, were the first young ladies to come to see me, bringing messages from their mother. They are now Mrs. Hiram Partee, Mrs. W. C. Rigsby and Mrs. Jeffers.

"When I was ready to return to my home in the early fall I brought with me the sweet memories of a town full of loving friends that have lasted through the years. Today I pay tribute to them all. There was the lovely Mrs. Gus Schreiner who had been the beautiful Miss Rummell, and Mrs. Amie Schreiner, who had been the lovely Miss Scott.

"Doctor Palmer had a great friend with whom he used to go fishing and hunting. He was Howard Lacy of England who had a ranch on Turtle Creek where he had a marvelous collection of butterflies. Mr. Lacy used to say, when he came in from his ranch and stopped at the St. Charles Hotel, and saw Annie come down the steps, 'There comes little Miss James.'

"When Mr. Lacy returned to England after many years living in this country, he presented his collection of butterflies, many glass cases of them, to the Scientific Society





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of San Antonio. Later when my daughter Helen, was duchess of the Court of Butterflies, Mrs. Polk McGill went to the Scientific Society, found her butterfly and sketched it for the wings of Helen's costume. We wanted the colors to be exact.

"In 1896 when my son John took typhoid fever he was placed under Doctor Palmer's care. With my nursing he recovered. As a thank offering for his recovery I presented in John's name to St. Peter's Church a set of hangings in embroidered crimson with beautiful ribbons for the Bible.

"The summer of 1895 found me with my family at the famous Hughes ranch, six miles from Boerne. Mr. W. Hughes, the owner, was the nephew of Sir Thomas Hughes who wrote *Tom Brown of Oxford* and other books.

"The library was a large room and was filled from floor to ceiling all around with rare first editions. It was decorated with beautiful terra cotta statuettes of Mr. and Mrs. Hughes done by famous artists. One such statuette was upstairs near my bed and I felt very well acquainted with them indeed. The handsome glass, bronzes and other things made the house seem like a museum filled with costly treasures. For five months I lived there with my little children and Aunt Charity.





"One of the outdoor treasures was Pumpkin. He was an old dun horse that had been born and reared on the ranch and was greatly loved. Woe betide me if, upon returning from a visit to Boerne, Pumpkin showed the slightest signs of fatigue. But I could never go very fast because he refused to do it. Then the harness wasn't very strong and it was tied up with many white strings.

"One time in returning to the ranch, facing the setting sun, I was wearing my diamond earrings. My friends in Boerne were anxious on account of those earrings. They were afraid they might induce someone to rob me.

"My daughter Annie was with me. On a lonely part of the road we passed a man driving two mules to a wagon. The man must have caught sight of my diamonds because, to my surprise, I heard the wagon being driven furiously behind me as though in an effort to catch up.

"Annie was on her knees, looking through the back window in the curtain. She said, 'Mother, he is whipping up the horses and is trying to catch up with us.'

"I took off my earrings immediately, rolled them up in a handkerchief and put them under the seat. Dear old Pumpkin knew something was wrong because he responded





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splendidly to my urging and outdistanced our pursuers. But it taught me a lesson. I sent my earrings by my husband to San Antonio and he put them in the bank.

"Mr. Hughes brought to this section of the country the first Angora goats to be seen here and established a goat ranch. I remember as I would sit in the evening under the trees they would come home and be all around me, shining in the sunset like silver.

"When Mr. Hughes had a shipment to New Mexico, or to any distant state, he accompanied them himself. He did not care to trust them to anyone.

"As time went on and travel became safer and more convenient, and with better trained help, he decided he would not always have to go with his goats. He made that remark to a friend just before his departure on one of those trips. But that trip was his last. He was sidetracked somewhere, asleep in the caboose, his goats being in some of the cars ahead of him, when there was a rear end collision. Mr. Hughes was killed.

"His body was brought back to Boerne and buried in the place he loved. It was my wish and desire to visit his grave and take some flowers there, but I never have been able to do so on account of failing health. The flowers of my memory I give him now.

"After his death his sister, Miss Emily





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Hughes, came down to Texas and gathered up his wife and children and carried them with all the house treasures back to Boston where they made their home.

"I hear that one of the daughters, Miss Janie Hughes, is an honor graduate of Wellesley College. I often have wished I could see them all again.

"Mr. Hughes himself was a graduate of Eton. I remember he used to astonish the Boerne people by going bareheaded even in the hot sun of summer. He never wore a hat. Mr. Hughes predicted that the country around Boerne would become one of the greatest goat raising countries in the world. His prediction has come true."

Although figures on the industry are lacking, it is known that fleece sheared from the backs of sheep as well as goats in the hill country northwest of San Antonio runs annually into millions of pounds. Almost every little ranch and farm, as well as the large ranches, have a certain number of sheep and goats which usually brings in a nice sum in the sale of mohair and wool.

"I spent nine summers in Waring in a little cottage on the ranch which we called Restful Cottage, with Mr. and Mrs. Robinson our host and hostess. My children called them Grandpa and Grandma, and they were really and truly that to my children, so





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kind and sweet at all times," remembers Mrs. James.

"The view from the little gallery of the cottage was over many hills. Aunt Charity used to say when she was out on the gallery, 'Oh, Mrs. James. There's the two twin sister mountains!'"

"Happy days at Waring! Our Arcadia! There were so many dear friends with whom to spend parts of the summers there. The children had their riding horses at the Nowlin ranch and I always had my road wagon.

"My daughter Helen was out for a horseback ride one afternoon and when her father asked her with whom she rode that day she said, 'With Bob and Rena.' They were Judge and Mrs. Robert B. Green.

"One time late in the evening we went walking down the railroad tracks because the roads were too dusty. In the party there was my dear friend Mrs. Dart and other friends of Mrs. Robinson. We were walking the tressle with the children and Aunt Charity when we saw approaching some very doubtful looking men. To this day I don't know what made me say I would get behind them and if they said anything I would be right there to take care of them. They all laughed at my bravery. But the men passed us by with a 'Good evening, ladies.'





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"Helen needed a pair of shoes very badly as her feet were on the ground, so I was glad of an excuse to go to Comfort. Mrs. Dart said she would go with me. I rented Mr. August Offer's buggy and gentle horse as I had been doing for years. Mrs. Dart held the reins driving and we put Helen on a cracker box between us. I can see her now with her curls flying in the breeze. It always was an all day affair to go to Comfort. It was only eight miles, but the horse never would go out of a walk.

"On this particular morning, going up a hill, one of the wheels rolled off. Of course we could not go on. We were near the Waring ranch where we got help and they took us back to Waring.

"Another day we tried again and got to Comfort and Helen had her new shoes. My children always loved new shoes.

"I asked the clerk in Mr. Faltin's store what was the oldest thing he had in the store as I wanted to buy it. I was standing in front of some shelves at the side of the front door and I picked up a blue vase and turned to the gentleman who was waiting on me and asked him how long it had been there.

"He said, 'Mrs. James, I have been here twenty-nine years and that vase was here when I came.'

"I bought that little blue vase with fluted





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top and two handles and to this day it is still one of my treasures.

"My husband would come up on the train and walk up the hill and the children would all run down to meet him. How lovely it was to have him.

"Mrs. Quigley, the section master's wife, had two boys. These boys had donkeys which they were kind enough to rent to my children when they did not want to ride themselves. The children would go with Aunt Charity to the hillside and call down to Mrs. Quigley, asking if they could use the donkeys. After asking her sons she would call back in her long drawl, 'Wel-l-l-l, James said you can have them this morning.'

"Then there was great rejoicing and running they came back to tell me they could ride. So passed these summers.

"One fall I went up on account of an epidemic in San Antonio. Some of the doctors said it was yellow fever, but others said it was not. Judge James thought it best for his family to be in Waring. The train was packed as it was the last train out of San Antonio for a week. Judge James had telegraphed that I would be down with the children on that night's train.

"When the train pulled in after a slow journey very early in the morning we went





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up the hill and Mrs. Robinson was there waiting for us. She told us to come right in as she had been expecting us for some time and had everything ready. I asked her if she got Judge James' telegram but she said no, she just knew we would be there.

"The next morning when Mrs. Robinson went down town to do her marketing she went by and asked the station master where her telegram was. He said it was there but he saw Mrs. James was already in town so he thought she wouldn't need it. Mr. and Mrs. William Negley were also at their summer home, 'Oak Park.'

"There was a little old lady in Waring who had a little green grocery store where Mrs. Robinson did her marketing. One day I said to Mrs. Robinson, 'I think the little old lady hears all the news that is happening around Waring.'

"Mrs. Robinson told me she couldn't help it as everybody came in and told her things.

"So the dear days in Waring stand out in memory, so blessed and happy as I ever was to know again.

"We built James Park on land that Judge James had owned for nearly thirty-five years. It is located a short distance from Comfort. This home was built during 1911. That summer we spent at the Saf-





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ford ranch so as to be nearer to the building going up.

"So in the summer of 1912 we went to James Park and to our house of dreams. I drove the stakes myself at each end of the house and helped lay out the foundation. It faced south with the Guadalupe and the Rigi and Jungfrau mountains in full view.

"When we were in doubt as to the direction the building would face Mr. William Negley suggested the way he had managed with his country home was to take a compass and face due north, then turn slightly east. In that way, he said, we would always have a shady place on the gallery.

"There was some question at James Park about forty acres that belonged to Mr. James but had not been fenced. When it was decided to include that forty acres with the rest, a neighbor claimed it. Mr. James always was so fine in his relationships with others. He said he wouldn't build James Park if our neighbor felt that way about it. For a while it looked as though the house would not be built as my husband did not want to live near an unfriendly neighbor. But he asked the gentleman to come to see him in his office in San Antonio and talk it over. When he came the only question the Judge asked him was could he give





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a deed for that piece of land. The man admitted he could not.

"Not long afterward I was driving with my husband in the buggy when we met the dear old gentleman walking by the road side. When we stopped I was introduced as 'My frau, Mrs. James.' My husband spoke German fluently.

"Our lovely stay at James Park was very short, only six weeks we were together with our children, our son John having just graduated from the University of Texas in law on June eleventh."

The stay was ended when, on July 17 of that year, Judge James died very suddenly.

"So," Mrs. James continues, "about fourteen years ago I gave James Park to my daughter Annie for her summer home, completely furnished just as it was. I did not move a single picture from the wall or a cup from the china closet but left it just as it was for her and her family.

"It was then, of course, I had to find a place to lay my head. So I asked my son to look around in Boerne for a summer home for me and we found a dear old rock house there. It was the old McFarland homestead and I was very fortunate indeed when Mr McFarland sold it to me eleven years ago. It is a lovely old home with an atmosphere





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of peace and sweetness which I find a great comfort. I have named the place Puccoon for my mother's old home in Virginia where she was born, reared and married and from which she came as my father's bride to the frontier of Texas.

"So I spend most of my summers up there with so many kind friends that come in to see me, and all my children and grandchildren.

"In looking back over my life I review with much pleasure the associations our families have had with some of the fine physicians who have attended us.

"Doctor Ferdinand von Herff was the first family physician. He brought four of my mother's babies into the world. I was the first. May was another and after our return to Texas after the war he was present at the birth of my sisters Annie and Leta.

"He was the kindest man I have ever known. For more than half a century the Old Doctor, as he became known after his son became a doctor, was one of the leading physicians of the state as well as of San Antonio. People came from Houston, from Dallas and even from Mexico to consult him.

"He was also noted for his benevolent and charitable work. He never refused to go to the poorest patient, though a good part of his time was thus taken up because of the





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poverty that existed in the early days of San Antonio.

"Perhaps there was a no more welcome and familiar figure on the streets than the Old Doctor, with his patriarchal beard, his twinkling blue eyes and his ever-ready kindly greeting. He kept up his practice until he was well past his four score years, and on many a bitterly cold night, when the younger doctors were snug in their beds, the Old Doctor would be routed out to go and see some old patient who could not even die without his friendly presence."

In this connection Doctor Pat Ireland Nixon in his book, *A Century of Medicine in San Antonio*, pays a glowing tribute to Doctor Herff.

"Dr. J. H. Burleson tells of a cousin of his," wrote Dr. Nixon, "who consulted Dr. Herff in 1903 for a progressive enlargement of the glands of the neck. Dr. Herff examined him carefully and then said, 'You have a disease called Hodgkin's disease. I have seen one other case like yours. It is a disease of the glandular system and is uniformly fatal.'

"Hodgkin had described this condition as early as 1832 but its true identity and its adequate differentiation from other diseases of the lymph glands were not clarified till Dorothy Reed did her work in 1902. One





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year later a pioneer doctor in San Antonio at the age of 82 was recognizing the disease and epitomizing its symptoms in three short sentences. Truly there were medical giants in those days!"

"But what provoked young doctors," Mrs. James continued, "was that the Old Doctor refused to raise his standard price of one dollar for a visit. When they remonstrated with him for being unprofessional in his charges he only chuckled and replied, 'Well, my boys, a dollar was a whole lot of money and a big price to charge when I first started practice, and it still is lots to lots of people. Guess I'll just keep on charging a dollar.' And he did, in spite of protests.

"His determination to stick to this principle was due partly to the sterling character of the man himself. But it was due more, perhaps, to ideas acquired while he was a student at the universities in Germany.

"He was born at Darmstadt of a family of Belgian nobles. He was educated in the Universities of Darmstadt, Bonn and Berlin, graduating at Giessen in 1842. In 1846 he came to Texas as a representative of the German Immigration Company to select a site for their colony.

"This colony, like those of New Braunfels and Fredericksburg, came out of the





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*Mainzer Adelsverein*, or Society of Young Nobles which was founded by Prince Solms-Braunfels. It was, however, different from the other settlements in that it was a communistic colony.

“There were about forty young students who were banded together and set out for the land of promise. They had no scheme of government, though by common consent they did select several leaders. One of these, Gustav Schleicher, was a graduate engineer. The others were scientists, doctors and leaders in the different professions. Doctor Herff had been sent ahead to select the land and decided to locate the colony on a tract near where the city of Llano stands today. The new colony was named Bettina after the authoress, Bettina von Arnim. It was short lived.

“The Society of Young Nobles only contracted to furnish supplies for one year. After that it was up to the boys. Since there was no head of the government, each man worked as the spirit moved him, which from all accounts was not often or hard. Work must have become less and less enticing as only two hundred bushels of corn was raised the first year.

“Communistic Bettina was definitely chalked up as a failure. Thus ended the attempt to supplant Indian culture with





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German culture on the Llano and to introduce the communistic idea of living in Texas. The members of the Bettina colony drifted to other German settlements, or returned to Germany.

“Doctor Herff went back to Germany and married the girl he already was engaged to. He served a year as assistant surgeon in the War of the Rebellion of 1848. When that was over he returned to Texas, in 1849, with his bride and settled at New Braunfels. After six months he came on to San Antonio where he spent his life in service to the city and its people.

“Doctor Herff was not only physician to the Williams family but to the James family as well. I have been told that my father-in-law always paid Doctor Herff's bills in land. It was Doctor Herff himself who told me that John James sent him his first patient after he came to San Antonio.

“Several years ago I was living at Puccoon, my summer home at Boerne, when Mr. and Mrs. August Herff called on me. Mr. Herff told me about the association with the James boys in the early days when they were all youngsters.

“The James home was on Commerce Street and the yard ran back to the river. The Herff home was just opposite, the





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house facing Houston Street, with the back yard line the river.

"Mr. Herff related that their favorite pastime in those days was a fight with the James boys. He said he was too young to be permitted to do much fighting, but he was allowed to gather up ammunition. They would build a barricade and then with a pile of small rocks which August had collected, they carried on a relentless neighborhood warfare with the James boys.

"Sometimes the James boys would swim across the river and eat green fruit from Doctor Herff's trees. It would, of course, make them quite ill with the stomachache. Doctor Herff then would be called to cure the James boys of the after effects of eating the Doctor's green fruit.

"Often, I suspect, he felt a great urge to give them a good thrashing instead of a dose of medicine!"



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## CHAPTER XV

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There once existed in San Antonio an exclusive little organization known as the "Fifty-two Club." It was organized by E. B. Chandler and only those who were born in the year 1852 were eligible for membership. Among the members was Judge John H. James.

The last member of the club, so far as is known, died recently, in 1937. He was Colonel Ike T. Pryor, well known ranchman. He is believed to have been the last survivor of the club.

"Mr. and Mrs. Chandler were dear friends of ours," Mrs. James says. "Mr. Chandler had a custom of giving a party on his birthday, May 24, each year for friends of his who were born in the same year as himself. I remember so well how John always looked forward to that birthday party. There always was a surprise in the invitation. Each was different. One of them read:



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## CHAPTER XV

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I have been asked to give a lecture on the  
history of the movement known as the  
Fifty-four Club. It was organized by  
E. B. Cummings and only three other men  
had in the year 1842 were eligible for  
membership. The members were  
Judge John H. Jones.

The last member of the club as far as is  
known died recently in 1937. He was  
Colonel John H. Jones, who was a cap-  
tain. He is buried in New York City in  
the city of the city.

The last of the club was John H. Jones.  
of course. The name was "The Fifty-four  
Club" because of giving a party on the 54th  
day May 24, each year for friends of the  
who were born in the same year as himself.  
I remember as well how John H. Jones looked  
forward to that birthday party. I was at  
ways was a surprise in the movement. That  
was different. One of them had

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*“ ‘Dear John—Come to my birthday party at eight o’clock. If you don’t come you will be shot. But if you do come you will be half shot.’ ”*

“Mr. Onderdonk, the first great artist of that name, was a member of the Fifty-two Club. On one occasion, which I believe was the last of the parties, he made the place cards for the different members.

“Mr. Chandler rang me up one morning in sheer desperation to say he was having the hardest time to find something against John to use at his party. But on walking to his office that morning it had come to him what he could do. He wanted to know if I had a picture of John and could I let him have it for a few days. But he requested the greatest secrecy on my part.

“I promised to have the picture ready for him and he sent for it within the hour. What he had decided to do was to have every member of the party caricatured by Mr. Onderdonk.

“John was shown telling a story. He stood before an old man who was leaning on his cane, near to falling backwards. John stood in front of him with fingers laid on his shoulders to emphasize his story. The old man was barely able to stand up under it.

“Mr. Chandler, being a surveyor, was

THE CHURCH OF THE



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depicted running a line. But the line was tied to a cow that was grazing quietly on the grass. Others were all shown in ludicrous poses, much to the enjoyment of the entire party.

"Mr. Chandler was a grand man. He was unable to survive the death of his wife. Only a very short time after she died he followed her. He left his beautiful home on West French Place to ladies alone in the world. It was not just to anyone, but for ladies without relatives where they can spend their last days in a comfort that amounts almost to luxury. To be eligible, however, a lady had to be invited and the invitation has to be approved by the board of directors.

"Just the other day two of my dear friends, Georgiana Kendall Fellows and Mrs. Elizabeth Stribling Maury, called. I told them I was writing my memoirs and had described some of my old dresses and the materials thereof.

"Mrs. Fellows said, 'Don't forget that tarleton.'

"I remember tarleton was used almost entirely for party dresses. It came in exquisite colors and was very thin and lovely in quality. Mrs. Fellows remembered a party dress of her own made of white tarleton.

"Mrs. Fellows' father was George Wil-





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kins Kendall, noted writer and former editor of the New Orleans Picayune, who came to Texas in the early days and had a ranch not far from Boerne. It was known as the Kendall ranch.

"The dress Mrs. Fellows remembered was made of white tarleton and was trimmed around the bottom with ivy leaves, leaf touching leaf. Around the waist was another row of leaves. Around the short puff sleeves and also at the neck were other rows. And she wore a wreath of ivy leaves in her hair. The whole made a strikingly beautiful costume.

"Mrs. Maury said we must not forget to mention the cashmeres and Henrietta cloth of silk and wool, and the grossgrain silks, some of them so stiff and heavy they would stand alone on the floor. Velvets in those days were silk on one side and velvet on the other.

"I had a black velvet dress with three basques. It had a moire silk band around the bottom about eight or ten inches wide and the skirt was lined and interlined. The basques I wore on different occasions. One was of black velvet with moire sleeves, the front of cut black jet *appliqued* on with black lace around the neck and sleeves. Another was made with black velvet sleeves and the vest part of blue moire silk cut in narrow





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folds with blue and passementerie pearls as large as peas set into the blue. The other basque was a black velvet with pink chiffon front shirred. The black velvet was brought to San Antoino from Paris by a famous modiste.

"I feel that my memoirs would not be complete without a mention of Doctor Barker. He was appointed by Governor Hogg as superintendent of the Southwestern Insane Asylum which position he held during Governor Hogg's term of office. Cures of some of these unfortunates were among his long list of accomplishments.

"My husband was devoted to him and when the children were taken suddenly sick and I could not get hold of Doctor Herff, Doctor Barker was called in.

"On one occasion my daughter Helen stepped on a nail. It went very deep and I sent for both Doctor Herff and Doctor Barker. Then I put my daughter to bed and anxiously watched both ends of the house. Doctor Barker always came by way of the North Flores Street entrance, which was the back of the house. Doctor Herff always came in from Camaron Street in front. I was afraid if they both came at the same time each would think it queer I had called the other. So I was delighted, after





some small attention to Helen, to see Doctor Barker coming down the back walk.

"He took charge of little Helen, probed and cleansed the wound. Then he ordered flax seed poultices as hot as she could bear them applied every hour. Then he sat down in a comfortable chair to rest awhile.

"It was a most uncomfortable time for me. I walked anxiously to the front door. Doctor Herff was not there but I knew he might be coming in at any moment.

"After what seemed an eternity to me Doctor Barker rose. He weighed more than three hundred pounds but he was a grand gentleman and physician. He said he thought he would be going along.

"He was hardly out of sight down the Flores Street walk when Doctor Herff marched in at the front. I said nothing about another Doctor's visit. He looked at Helen, finally told me to soak the foot in something, I've forgotten what, and to put cold compresses to the wound.

"After he left I got busy. I combined the prescriptions, using a hot poultice and then a cold compress of whatever the solution he had ordered. It worked out all right. I had a knack of combining prescriptions. That wasn't the only time both Doctors had called on some member of my family."

Mrs. James mentions the North Flores





## I REMEMBER

Street entrance which actually was through another yard. It was in 1892 that Judge James bought the rock house which adjoins the James property at the rear. He gave it to his wife as a birthday present. It was first numbered 463 and later was changed to 509 North Flores.

The house was quite a history itself, having been the residence of Captain and Mrs. Charles Phillips Smith for a long time. The house was built shortly after Captain Smith's marriage in 1867, the lot on which it stands having been deeded to the bride by her grandmother, Mrs. Dolores Seguin Ruiz Rodriguez.

Since coming into possession of the James family it has variously been used as a guest house and a store house, and in recent years has been rented. It afforded easy access to the Camaron Street house from that part of the city as West Martin was not opened, and Camaron Street itself was in wet weather almost a loblolly until Mayor John G. Tobin cleaned it up and opened West Martin.

It was not only the condition of Camaron Street but the use of the San Pedro Creek banks opposite the James house as a dumping ground for a little of everything that continued until Mayor Tobin's time. Then the creek was deepened and straightened, its





## I REMEMBER

banks were sodded and no more refuse was dumped there.

Among the lamented friends of Mrs. James was one who was a poetess, and who frequently wrote verse to or about her friend. She was Mrs. Mary Saunders who lived at Walnut Grove ranch.

Mrs. Saunders had the distinction, although she was born in England, of becoming poet laureate of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas.

As a young girl she always was interested in Texas, reading everything she could find about the state, and thrilling to the heroic story of the fall of the Alamo, and of the valiant struggle of the Texans to throw off Mexican tyranny. She came to Texas when she was sixteen years old and made it her permanent home.

"Mrs. Saunders was a frequent visitor to me in my home," Mrs. James says, "and my children loved her as a second mother. I have many poems that she wrote to me for my birthdays and Christmas. There is an especially beautiful one written for my birthday in 1901.

"There was an amazing thing in connection with Mrs. Saunders' death. She often told me that she would always love me and would think of me until she died—that her





## I REMEMBER

last thoughts would be of me, was her declaration.

"For her birthday that March I asked her to send me a list of things she would like as I was afraid I might send her something she did not want. She made out a list saying any one of the items mentioned she would be glad to receive.

"I took the list with me and bought everything on it. I named a gift for each of my children. But she was taken ill a few days before her birthday and it happened her little package from me never was opened.

"It was Sunday afternoon that I received a long distance telephone call from Walnut Grove, near Boerne. It was her grandson calling to tell me he had a message from his grandmother for me. He said she told him to tell me she was thinking of me and loving me.

"Before he could get back to her with my return message she had gone. She had passed from earth to heaven, but she had kept her word to me. I had been her last thought."

The beautiful poem Mrs. James mentions, follows. It was written while Mrs. Saunders was in Houston and was sent so as to be received on Mrs. James' forty-second birthday. Here is the poem.





## I REMEMBER

To

*Mrs. Maria Williams James*

From

*Mary Saunders*

White-souled and beautiful with inward grace,  
Across the intervening years I see  
You pass unchanged to your appointed place,  
The lilled land beside the crystal sea,—  
The land whose name can lift our thoughts above  
Earth's fretting cares, the realm of perfect love.

I hear the music of your gentle words,  
Soft, sweet and calm they fall with healing fraught,  
Touching the spirit's deepest, tend'rest chords,  
No blemish mars their beauty, not a thought  
Of evil darkens. Oh, how richly blest  
Are those love-sheltered in that faithful breast.

Husband and children, sacred household ties,  
The proudest crown of perfect womanhood,  
Are yours, and brooding in those dove like eyes  
Is sweet content, the thought, "Our God is good."  
"I trust Him wholly, hear His 'Peace be still'  
And life is perfect, guided by His will."

It is your natal day, how soft and still  
Is this ripe, languorous, golden autumn day.  
Deep purple shadows rest upon the hill,  
And yellow blossoms make the valley gay.  
A minor chord, music whispered low,  
Comes from the trees just touched with crimson glow.



## I REMEMBER

In olden days the poets prophesied,  
But now, alas! the oracle is dumb.  
No more through Delphian shades doth priestess  
    glide,  
Nor devotee to vocal statue come;  
Yet listen, for the vision comes to me,  
Serene and blest your autumn days shall be.

Because your deeds, in girlhood and in prime,  
Won for you daily blessings from the old;  
So when you wear the snowy wreath of time  
These shall return to you, aye manifold.  
Close in your heart, dear friend, the promise keep,  
"What a man soweth shall he also reap."

Houston,  
October 6, 1901  
(42nd birthday)

At home—Walnut Grove Ranch, Boerne, Texas  
Poet Laureate of the Daughters of the Republic of  
Texas.





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## CHAPTER XVI

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Through her lifetime Mrs. James has been closely identified with St. Marks Episcopal Church in San Antonio, the second Protestant church to be organized in the city. The first was the old First Presbyterian Church, located at the corner of Houston and North Flores streets. This church building was, at one time, used by the Episcopalians for their services.

The early history of St. Marks is closely connected with the stay of General Robert E. Lee in Texas before the war, when he was a Lieutenant Colonel in the United States army. In fact, during the years 1855 to 1858, when there was no rector of the organization, General Lee is said frequently to have read the Episcopal burial service for deceased members of the little congregation.

Unfortunately the early records of St. Marks either were lost or were destroyed by fire. The early history is, therefore, a matter



## I REMEMBER

of tradition. Much of the tradition, however, has been authenticated by the memories of early communicants of the newly established church.

The beginning of what later became St. Marks was a mission, founded in 1850 by the Reverend J. F. Fish, a chaplain in the United States army, who gathered together what Episcopalians were in the city to form the nucleus from which finally the present church sprang. It was fostered and encouraged by men of the army as well as citizens of San Antonio.

The mission proved unsuccessful and after about two years it failed. However, its spirit survived for in 1853 the Reverend Charles F. Rottenstein revived it and kept it going for about two years when it failed again. The first mission was called 'Trinity' and the well known Colonel J. Y. Dashiell was one of those who helped to establish it.

Meetings first were held in an adobe building located where the Groos National Bank now stands. Later the Reverend Mr. Rottenstein held services on the second floor of a building belonging to Bryan Callaghan, father of the man who later served San Antonio for many years as its mayor.

At the dissolution of the second mission even the fixtures were sold by the constable. Later a lot was purchased on what was then





## I REMEMBER

known as Rincon, later to be named St. Marys Street, and a foundation for a church edifice was begun. It had to be dug up and sold for debts.

It was about that time that an Episcopalian officer of the United States army, a man who was intensely religious, and who was later to make himself one of the foremost Americans of all time, was assigned to the San Antonio territory. He was Robert E. Lee. The earliest record of the parish now available shows that he was a baptized, confirmed communicant of the little congregation in 1856.

Later, in the absence of a rector, Colonel Lee on various occasions was to read the burial service of his church in connection with a funeral. He had been raised under the influence and culture of the church in Virginia and far away from friends and family he felt strongly the need of the ministry of the church. His wife was sick. His finances were not in good shape. It was a long way, in those days, from the comfort and security of the Old Dominion to the untamed wilderness that was West Texas.

In 1858 a new rector, the Reverend Lucius Jones, gathered together the faithful and organized a new congregation. For a time it drifted about, meeting first at one place and then at another. At last the present site of





## I REMEMBER

the church edifice was secured. Tradition says that the procurement of the land was made possible by gifts on the part of the Maverick, Vance and Beck families. Important among those who labored in behalf of the new structure was Colonel Lee and Mrs. Josephine Tobin.

The Reverend Mr. Jones held his first service on Easter Sunday, 1858. It was on December 22, 1859, that the cornerstone of the church building, the present structure, was laid.

The war shortly afterward prevented further progress with the building. Mr. Jones, although of Northern birth, went with the Southern forces as an army chaplain. He did not live to return to San Antonio. He was succeeded by the Reverend H. G. Batterson, who remained only a short time, by the Reverend J. J. Nicholson of Mobile, who founded St. Mary's Hall in 1865 and died in the same year, and by the Reverend Edwin A. Wagner, who assumed both the rectorship and charge of the school.

It was during his time that John D. Wolfe donated Wolfe Hall in the interests of Christian education. But in the following year, 1866, the school was closed on account of cholera, and the next year the congregation purchased the Hall and occupied it as a church. In 1870 it was fitted in churchly





## I REMEMBER

style by a liberal member whose name is not known.

It was in 1868 that a man came to be rector of St. Marks whose name is outstanding in the history of the struggling church. Mrs. James knew him well. He was the Reverend Walter R. Richardson, who was affectionately known to the community and his parish as "Dean Richardson." He was rector of the church for thirty-eight years and won a place in the hearts of his people such as few men ever have gained.

He took charge of the parish on Trinity Sunday, June 7, 1868. Shortly thereafter work was resumed on the old foundation near the corner of Jefferson and Pecan streets. It took years to complete the structure, but Dean Richardson never wavered.

Mrs. James remembers playing, as a child, over the unfinished foundation, and remembers how slowly later the walls grew up and the building took shape.

The structure was opened for public service in 1875. The occasion marked the first important event in the episcopate of the Right Reverend Robert W. B. Elliott, D. D., first Bishop of the Missionary district of West Texas.

On the eve of the Texas Centennial it was decided to raise a tablet or marker in memory of the pioneers of the parish, including





## I REMEMBER

General Lee. The following is quoted from an anniversary pamphlet issued in 1935. It contains reasons for the marker.

"Robert E. Lee stands in the front rank of true American nobility. Each year the entire nation more fully senses this fact. He was one of the great men of America. It is one of St. Marks proudest claims that Robert E. Lee was one of the earliest workers and builders of the Parish. What then could be more fitting than \* \* \* a tablet or marker be erected on the grounds of St. Marks in memory of General Robert E. Lee and the other pioneers of the Parish?"

Tradition has it that Lee, who came into the life of the struggling mission at a critical time, not only was active in the spiritual life of the organization, but labored with the rector in the actual construction of the foundation of the church, was a vestryman and also a teacher in the Sunday school. From recorded letters to his wife, at that time an invalid, it is shown how deeply he felt about the need and influence of his church.

The pamphlet before mentioned included a partial list of pioneer members of the parish.

"Unfortunately," it is noted, "this list is incomplete because early parish records were lost or destroyed by fire."

This list, however, includes the names of





## I REMEMBER

a number of those who had part in making Texas history. It is as follows:

General J. B. Hood, then a Lieutenant, later leader of Hood's Brigade; General Joseph E. Johnston, then Lieutenant Colonel; James French, former mayor of San Antonio; George W. Kendall, noted author and explorer; General James Longstreet, then Major; John James, civil engineer; Gustav Schleicher, later Congressman; Columbus Upson, later Congressman; Samuel Newton, first master of Freemasonry in San Antonio; J. H. Kampmann, contractor who built the Menger Hotel and other early structures; George H. Giddings, merchant and owner of the stage line from New Orleans to San Francisco which passed through San Antonio; Major G. T. Howard, Mexican War veteran, later Indian Commissioner; George R. Dashiell, district clerk; Colonel J. Y. Dashiell, U. S. paymaster, later editor of the Herald; Captain D. C. Ogden, pioneer, Indian fighter; Samuel A. Maverick, founder of noted Maverick family; William G. Tobin, host of the Plaza and Vance Houses; William Vance, merchant; Right Reverend Alexander Gregg, D. D.; Mrs. Etta Canterbury, wife of prominent business man; Mrs. Sarah Eager, wife of Robert Eager, daughter of Mrs. Canterbury; Mrs. Ann Bradley, whose home was where





## I REMEMBER

the Y. M. C. A. stands; Mrs. Susan Edwards; Mrs. Josephine Tobin, noted church worker; General John R. Baylor; Colonel Albert Sidney Johnston, of war fame; Erastus Reed, furniture dealer; Samuel Bell, pioneer jeweler; Doctor G. J. Houston, noted physician and planter; Nathaniel Lewis, pioneer; Samuel Sidney Smith, for many years county clerk; General William H. Young, brilliant lawyer; Judge James H. McLeary, later Federal judge in Porto Rico; Josiah Pancoast, pioneer merchant; Doctor E. L. Beaumont, physician; General E. O. C. Ord; former commander, department of Texas; General Wade Hampton, noted Confederate; Joseph H. Beck; William Prescott; Colonel Philip Stockton; Major Robert W. Brahan; Colonel Hugh F. Young, and W. R. Story.





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## CHAPTER XVII

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There has grown up in San Antonio a colorful and dramatic spectacle. It has become not only a joyful celebration of the coming of spring and the consequent recurrence of life and beauty together with the rebirth of flowers. It also commemorates the anniversary of the Battle of San Jacinto wherein Texas won its independence from Mexico. It has become an annual event of such magnitude as to remind one of the New Orleans Mardi Gras and other similar festive occasions.

It is the San Jacinto Festival and Battle of Flowers. Three organizations have been formed to handle the week's festivities. There is the Battle of Flowers association, composed of ladies, which has charge of the Fiesta Fete and Battle of Flowers; the Fiesta association composed of men in charge of other features of the carnival including the selection of the King of the Fiesta, and the



## I REMEMBER

third, a purely social organization, the Order of the Alamo, composed entirely of men, which assumes responsibility for the choice of the Queen and for her entertainment.

Just when the first celebration was held is not definitely known. It is believed to have been staged in honor of President Benjamin Harrison in connection with his visit to the Alamo City, on April 21, 1891. At least it was more pretentious than it ever had been before.

For many years, however, before the associations were organized it was the custom of the young people of San Antonio to join in the world-wide revelry in acknowledgment of the coming of spring on the date of the anniversary of the San Jacinto battle, April 21, thus patriotically uniting the joyousness of the new growing year with the celebration of independence gained. This revelry far anti-dated the first set festival.

At first the activities were limited. The most famous part of the festivities became known as the Battle of Flowers. Youth and beauty of the city, in highly decorated carriages, would circle about Alamo Plaza, pelt-ing each other with spring flowers as they passed.

The fame and importance of the occasion grew until, by 1909, the Fiesta, as it was





## I REMEMBER

then called, lasted several days, and features constantly were being added to it.

To John B. Carrington, then secretary of the Chamber of Commerce, goes the credit for bringing organization into the festivities. He proposed a division of responsibility for the activities of a week. The idea took root immediately, the organizations mentioned being formed.

Mr. Carrington became the first president of the Order of the Alamo and in that year, 1909, the Order first took an active place in the affairs of Fiesta week in San Antonio. It was in that year the first coronation was staged and it was followed by a great ball in honor of its queen.

Beethoven Hall was the first throne room of Fiesta royalty and Miss Eda Kampmann was the first queen of the "Court of Springtime."

Since then there has been a great development and growth, not only in the Order of the Alamo, but in the magnitude and splendor of the coronations and balls until this year, 1937, far eclipsed all that had gone before. The Order always has been proud of the fact that its Queens regard their choice as San Antonio's highest social honor.

In addition to a court of ladies-in-waiting to the queen from the city, with their lords, there always has been an out-of-town group





## I REMEMBER

of ladies- and lords-in-waiting. With each year the robes and costumes have increased in splendor, the stage settings have been more sumptuous, and the coronation becomes more and more the highest peak of the social events of the year.

Starting from an humble beginning Fiesta Week has become known from one end of the country to the other as a spectacle well worth seeing. The parade of the Battle of Flowers alone attracts thousands upon thousands of spectators, lining the streets for many blocks. In place of the carriages with their ornate decorations which once made the rounds of Alamo Plaza, a great pageant, miles long, makes its circuit of the main portion of the city. It always includes a large number of particularly beautiful, attractive and commemorative floats. On these floats ride the principal personages of the celebration.

Two of the daughters of Mrs. James have had prominent parts, in different years, in the coronation ceremonies. In 1914 Miss Mary Greenhow James, since become Mrs. Edwin Meredith Sykes, was the Duchess of November in the coronation pageant. That was the first year in which the Queen was crowned in the presence of her court. In that year the sovereign was Miss Catherine Franklin. In that year also the Majestic





## I REMEMBER

theatre was used for the scene of the coronation.

It was by far the most ambitious spectacle in the history of the Fiesta up to that time. For the first time a raised platform was constructed over the center tier of seats and was brilliantly lighted, whereon the Queen with her Duchesses might enter instead of marching down the central aisle.

In 1917 Miss Helen Adelle James, who that same year was to become Mrs. Elmer Charles de Montel, was Duchess of Agaronia.

The court that year was known as the "Court of Butterflies." It was necessary to go to the Scientific Society to find an Agaronia butterfly so that the wings Miss James wore on her shoulders might have the exact coloring of the real butterfly.

The stage of the Majestic theatre was converted into a bower of cherry trees in bloom. In the distance could be seen the snowcapped mountains of Japan. A teak-wood throne awaited the queen who, that year, was Miss Elizabeth Kokernot.

Each successive year a new theme has been worked out and a different spectacle has been the result. About a dozen years ago the committee on theme for the coronation was appointed a year in advance, which has been of marked benefit, giving ample time for working it out.



## I REMEMBER

In recent years the city auditorium has been the scene of the coronation, where ample space not only for the gorgeous spectacle itself, but for spectators, is available.

1907-1908

1907-1908. The coronation of the City of London. The coronation took place on the 12th of June, 1907. The coronation was held at the City of London. The coronation was held at the City of London. The coronation was held at the City of London.

1908-1909. The coronation of the City of London. The coronation took place on the 12th of June, 1908. The coronation was held at the City of London. The coronation was held at the City of London. The coronation was held at the City of London.

1909-1910. The coronation of the City of London. The coronation took place on the 12th of June, 1909. The coronation was held at the City of London. The coronation was held at the City of London. The coronation was held at the City of London.

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## CHAPTER XVIII

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Much of the development of the City of San Antonio and the area of Southwest Texas where her father served, has been during the lifetime of Mrs. James, and within her memory.

In 1860 the official population of the city was 8,235. That was a year after the baby girl who was to become Mrs. James was born. The only lights were candles. The streets were narrow, crooked and unpaved—dusty in dry weather and deep in mud during rainy times.

Electricity was unknown. Telephones had not been invented. Artificial gas was used for the first time in that year. Buildings were low, a large number of them being built of adobe.

In 1930 the official population of the city was 231,542 and of Bexar County, 293,533. It is considerably greater in 1937.



## I REMEMBER

A group of skyscrapers towers over the business section.

The San Antonio River, the scene in Mrs. James' childhood of innumerable little bathhouses perched on floating whiskey barrels, still bubbles its way merrily for ten miles through the city, but its surface is free of floating bathhouses, its banks clear of private laundries. Forty-two bridges span it within the city limits. Fifty-one additional bridges provide means of crossing various creeks in the city.

And the wild border, where a little Virginia bride in 1852 shivered at the thought of raiding Indians, or paled when the lonely coyote howled dolefully at the moon, or shrank from the scream of a prowling panther, and where one traveled for miles without sight of habitation, has blossomed into fruitful fields and gardens. In many sections it is thickly populated.

In the hill country northwest of the city where John James, in the early days, laid out the towns of Bandera, Boerne and Quihi, the scene of numerous Indian raids in Mrs. James' childhood, or murder and destruction of property by savages, has become the seat of a great industry. Mrs. James remembers its beginning, when the first goats were brought into the section. Now the center





## I REMEMBER

of the district, Kerrville, handles great quantities of mohair and wool every season.

North, east and south of San Antonio much of the territory is occupied by thrifty farmers. Busy little cities dot the countryside.

In place of the abandoned port of Indianola ships now call at Galveston, Houston, Corpus Christi and Brownsville.

Artificial gas first was manufactured in San Antonio in 1860. Inasmuch as no railroad had penetrated so deeply into the wilderness at that time it was necessary to bring in the resin, then used in the manufacture of gas, by ship to Indianola and thence by ox train to the city. Later "Pennsylvania" coal was used in preference to resin, but the transportation methods remained the same.

Mrs. James remembers the first means of public transportation to be put into operation. It was in 1875. The appearance of such conveyances on the streets now probably would cause a traffic jam. For the first street cars were mule cars, curious little box-like carriers, the plodding mules taking their own good time to making their trips.

Specimens of the various types of public conveyances used, from the mule cars to the recently abandoned large electrics, are





## I REMEMBER

on display at the Witte museum in San Antonio.

Mrs. James remembers when electric lights first made their appearance. The initial trial was highly unsuccessful. That was in 1882. A light was turned on in front of the postoffice, but it was so faulty it did not meet with popular approval.

A year later, however, improvements having been made, the city appropriated the sum of \$1,500 to cover the cost of installing four electric street lamps on Main Plaza.

One of the old landmarks of the city is the Joske department store. Mrs. James can remember when the store first came into being.

Julius Joske came to San Antonio and opened a very small store in the early '70's. He then returned to Europe and arranged for his family to come to this country with him.

It was in 1873 that a sign reading, "J. Joske & Sons" was placed over a tiny adobe building on Austin Street.

It was long before that, in 1851, that the Pioneer Flour Mills were founded by C. H. Guenther. The following year Samuel Bell and his two sons, David and James, established the Bell Jewelry Company.

The first courthouse was erected in San Antonio in 1733. It was built under a



the district as it is now bounded by the river  
and the sea.

Mr. James Thompson, who wrote a plan  
for the district, says that the first  
year was highly successful. The year 1865  
was the first year in which the district  
the population had not been in excess of 100  
and was very popular.

A few days before the opening of the  
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## I REMEMBER

special grant from the king of Spain. It was located on the east side of Main Plaza and on the north side of Market Street, directly across from where the San Fernando Cathedral stands. It was in use until, on September 6, 1850, a second courthouse was begun in the northwest part of Military Plaza in front of the Governor's palace.

The building Mrs. James remembers was the third. It was built on the east side of Soledad Street, about midway between Houston and Commerce streets.

The city of San Antonio was incorporated on September 19, 1837. As a city it is, therefore, just a century old. Its first mayor was John W. Smith. The present city limits were established in 1875.

The first paving was laid during the time that Bryan Callaghan was mayor. Mesquite blocks were the materials used.

The first postoffice was on Quinta Street, east of the present courthouse. The name of the street has been changed to Dwyer. The original building was occupied on May 22, 1846. Prior to that time private buildings had been used for the mails.

Until 1800 marriage licenses for residents of San Antonio and vicinity had to be obtained from Saltillo, the capital of the state of Coahuila. In that year, however,



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Librarians at University of Texas, Austin.

Jack C. Butterfield, San Antonio.



## A P P E N D I X

Copies of documents of historical interest, portions of a diary and various other papers connected either with the Williams or the James families, mostly outside the recollections of Mrs. John Hern- don James or contemporary with her life, are found herein.

There is first the memorial of Colonel Thomas Greenhow Williams, mentioned in the text hereto- fore, on his visit to Washington in 1874 as the authorized representative of the City of San Antonio.

President Ulysses S. Grant did not answer the memorial or, as far as is known, take any action on it. Through other channels Colonel Williams suc- ceeded in his mission, securing for San Antonio the initial building of what is now Fort Sam Houston.

The memorial, the original of which is in the possession of John Alexander James, grandson of the memorialist, is as follows:

“Washington, D. C.

“May 4, 1874.

“To the President of the United States:

“Mr. President—Your memorialist the under- signed has been sent by the City of San Antonio, Texas, to appeal to you as the Chief Executive officer of the Government of the United States, for the prompt execution of a law, in a case affecting the interests of that city and also those of the United States.

“One of the sections of an Act (Sundry Civil Service Bill) passed by the last Congress and ap- proved by you on the 3d, March, 1873, provides an appropriation of (\$100,000) one hundred thousand





## I REMEMBER

dollars for the construction of a Quartermaster and Commissary Depot and workshops, etc., at San Antonio.

"The Attorney General of the United States had previously approved and accepted a deed from that city of a tract of land for a site for said Depot. The site was selected by the Quartermaster General of the army.

"The Hon. Secretary of War, however, on the 24 March, 1873—three weeks after the passage and approval of the Act, prohibited any steps from being taken towards constructing the Depot, and up to this time no executive action has given any effect to the law.

"Under existing laws, said appropriation will be covered back into the Treasury, unless work is commenced prior to 30 June proximo (1874).

" 'There is an obligation of good faith towards the city which is an additional argument for carrying out the project,' of constructing this Depot, are the words of the Quartermaster General, amongst many most forcible and clear reasons adduced by him in his letter of the 18 January, 1873—copy herewith submitted—to which your memorialist would beg attention, and also to General W. T. Sherman's endorsement on said letter, dated 20 of January, 1873, and further, to Quartermaster General's official report, dated 10 October, 1873, page 19.

"Your memorialist would respectfully ask the President's attention to a decision of an Attorney General of the U. S. (Hon. Caleb Cushing) applicable to this case. See Vol. VII, Opinions of Attorney General page 140, as follows:

" 'Most especially is this true of Acts making appropriations of public money for the public service. It may be that we, the executive officers, think the sum appropriated is more than was necessary, or





## APPENDIX

otherwise inexpedient, but that is not sufficient reason for refusing to give its due effect to the law.'

"On or before 1st January, 1875, San Antonio will be connected by Rail with all the Railroads of the United States—by Columbus, Houston, Galveston, Texarkana, Fulton, St. Louis, Cairo, &c., and within the year 1875 even more directly by the International R. R. via Austin, &c.

"The people of Texas, Mr. President, regard you with kindness and gratitude for your recent action in the politics of their state. San Antonio being the centre, commercially, of that splendid country, Western Texas, the people of that section look to you with confidence that a law so just and equitable to them, so economical and advantageous to the United States, shall no longer continue a dead letter, but that you will direct the proper officer to commence forthwith the important work of constructing that Depot at San Antonio, Texas.

"With the highest respect, Yr. Ob. Svt.

(Signed)

"Thos. G. Williams,  
"Agent for the City of San  
Antonio, Tx."

When Colonel Williams returned from his first visit to Washington in behalf of the City of San Antonio in 1873, he had been made a special Indian Commissioner for the removal of the Kickapoo and other Indian tribes from the Texas-Mexican border. These Indians were believed to have been making trouble for years.

Julius W. Van Slyck, editor and proprietor of the San Antonio Daily Express at the time, took exception to the appointment. His paper carried at its masthead the announcement, "Official Journal of the United States," "Official Journal of Bexar County."





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Editor Van Slyck expressed his sentiments in an editorial published in his newspaper on June 19, 1873, captioned OUR INDIAN AGENT.

The original clippings, of the editorial and Colonel Williams' reply, and other clippings copied here, are in the possession of John Alexander James, grandson of Colonel Williams, of San Antonio. Copies of the clippings follow.

### "OUR INDIAN AGENT.

"Personally we have no objection to the appointment of Col. Williams as Agent for the removal of the Kickapoos.

"He will attend to the removal of the Kickapoos as well as anybody, perhaps better than many, but politically we object to the appointment of Col. Williams or any other Democrat or Liberal Republican to any position under the U. S. Government.

"Hence, as a pioneer Republican journal of Texas we object to all such appointments as that of Col. Williams.

"The Republicans of Texas have had much cause to complain of the manner in which the federal patronage has been heretofore distributed, but we are confident that in the appointment of Col. Thos. G. Williams the authorities at Washington have been deceived.

"On general principles this making treason odious by encouraging open and avowed enemies of the Government is worse than disgraceful.

"The appointment of Col. Williams reminds us of an anecdote:

"During one of the wars between the Greeks and the Turks, the latter besieged a seaport town of the former and the inhabitants, weary of eating rats, etc., had resolved to surrender on the next day, when, as luck would have it, the captain of a Turkish frigate captured a vessel loaded with provisions in-





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tended for the starving town. Among nice things on board were a large quantity of canned goods, which the Turkish captain took to be a new kind of destructive projectile, and wishing to punish the inhabitants for their obstinacy he began early next morning to pepper them fresh oysters and devilled ham, and continued during the night to make them miserable with strawberry jelly.

"This is about the way the Government convinced Col. Williams that it was wrong for him to desert the flag he had sworn to uphold.

"We hope the comparison will not hold good to the end, for the Greeks, owing to the highly seasoned projectiles, became like 'young giants refreshed with new wine,' and made mince-meat of the Turkish land forces.

"During the election which resulted in the defeat of Greeley, the election of our 'donkey haughty' Legislature and our unfortunate city Administration, Col. Williams turned up suddenly like 'Jack in the Box' whenever there was an opportunity. He gave up the whole of his mind to beating Grant, and was a calcium light of intense brilliancy at ward and mass meetings. The first thing our new city Administration did was to furnish him and some other legal gentlemen the necessary funds and send them on the ostensibly 'Tom Fool's' errand to Washington to secure the Depot for San Antonio.

"If Col. Williams claims that he has done anything for us in the Depot line, it is a little singular that he has not deigned as yet, to open his mouth either in public or in the papers about it. In fact it is now regarded as certain that he did nothing nor expected to do anything, and his trip to Washington was the reward of political services to defeat Grant.

"Col. Williams succeeding in getting his disabili-





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ties removed, and then of course he moved Grant's works as if the war were still going on. The bore of Mr. Greeley's inconsolable friend is in excess of his caliber and U. S. Grant surrendered at discretion.

"He returns to his astonished Grant-hating Democratic friends in San Antonio as a Federal Official, Agent for the removal of the Santa Rosa Kickapoos.

"It is to be hoped, if there is an unconquerable prejudice in Washington against men who have been steadfast in their allegiance to the Republican party that in the future unmitigated Democrats will be preferred to professional place-seekers in filling the Federal appointment.

"We think, too, that taking into consideration the increase of taxes that will be fastened on our citizens by Col. Williams' city Administration and Legislature that it would be no more than fair that he should refund the \$1700 advanced him by the city for the acquisition of such tangible results to himself particularly as he is unable or unwilling to show us how he has advanced our interest in the Depot matter.

"Our columns are open to him or anybody else who wishes to rise and explain."

Colonel Williams himself was abundantly willing and able to "rise and explain." Under the same date on which the foregoing editorial was published he wrote his answer. It was also published in the Express. It was headed "Communicated," and reads as follows:

"San Antonio, Texas.

June 19th, 1873

"Editor San Antonio Express:—In the issue of your paper of the 19th inst., you have been pleased to





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devote your leading editorial to me, and the public matters, municipal as well as national, with which it has been my fortune to have been connected since January last. Availing myself of your kind invitation to rise and explain, I ask you to publish this letter.

"Personally, I have no objection to you, or to your opinions as to the political view of my appointment, as commissioner, or agent, for the removal of Indians from Mexico. Your assertion, that I will attend to the removal of the Kickapoos, as well as anybody perhaps better than many, is kind and complimentary, for it I thank you.

"Now, as to your objections to all such appointments as mine, I can only say that this is a question between you and the authorities at Washington. If they could only have heard your objections and violent protest in time, doubtless they would have been spared the mortification of your disapproval and severely sarcastic criticism upon their action. It may be hoped that neither the President nor the Secretary of the Interior will be so unfortunate as accidentally to hear of your displeasure.

"A Republican Congress having by a two-thirds vote of both Houses, removed my political disabilities, the administration very justly saw neither danger, nor impropriety in making me a Federal official, believing, no doubt, that I would faithfully execute my promise to earnestly and correctly perform the duties assigned to me. That you would have objected to it, could hardly have been anticipated, or foreseen, and I will assuredly, use every effort to confirm the confidence placed in me.

"The course recently taken by the administration to ensure a speedy adjustment of our Mexican difficulties is one that must, and does, without doubt, command the hearty approval of every citizen of Texas, without regard to any past differences in





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politics. And as a citizen of Texas, particularly Western Texas, I sincerely rejoice in the noble, firm and true stand our National authorities have taken in the Indian and Mexican affair. With every other citizen of Texas whether Democrat, Republican, or Liberal, I have heard with the greatest pride and satisfaction, that the administration is determined to protect our citizens, let the odds be what they may.

"With regard to your remarks about my mission to Washington on the Depot business, I beg leave to call your attention to the files of the San Antonio Express, say since the 1st of March, Mr. Van Slyck, editor and proprietor of the Express, published, perhaps more than once the result of my mission to Washington about the Depot, and I believe was kind enough to approve and commend my action. However, my official reports to the Mayor and Board of Aldermen was duly rendered by me, and approved by them.

"My aid in securing an appropriation by Congress of \$100,000 for the construction of a Quartermaster's Depot upon land donated by the city of San Antonio is known and acknowledged by the city authorities and generally by my fellow citizens of this city.

"That the Hon. Secretary of War has seen fit to suspend, up to this time, any steps for the expenditure of this money appropriated by Congress, is a matter about which I have nothing to say or do.

"Although, it would seem, that the largely increased military force at Duncan and Clark (the two posts supplied from San Antonio) would render the strong recommendations of Gen. Sherman and Gen. Meigs imperative for the immediate construction of this Depot.

(Signed)

"Thos. G. Williams."





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There was further bitterness over the Indian matter. There were those who apparently believed the mission must fail, and urged strong military action as a remedy. That is evidenced in an editorial in the Daily Herald (San Antonio) dated June 29, 1873.

Colonel Williams and his party had recently returned from their first visit to Mexico, bringing certain Indian chiefs back with them.

Under the caption, "OUR MEXICAN RELATIONS," the Herald editorial reads:

"Our Indian Commissioners for the removal of the Kickapoos from Mexico, have visited our city accompanied by Col. Montero, a Mexican official acting in behalf of the Mexican government as its agent with these Indians, who on his visit to San Antonio, was fully accredited by Governor Cespedas (the name is misspelled—it is properly Cepeda) of Coahuila. These gentlemen with the Pottawatomie Chief who came with them and his Pottawatomie interpreter have all returned to the Rio Grande, and we presume to Mexico.

"The prime object of their mission to San Antonio was to obtain from General Augur permission for the return of the captives sent in by General MacKenzie to their friends in Mexico, to operate as an inducement for those savages to consent to remove to the reservation intended for them in the Indian Territory. When the pertinacious requests of the Indian Commissioners had failed in inducing the General commanding this Department to revoke his order, for the Indian prisoners to be conveyed to Fort Gibson; then Col. Montero was brought to the front, who stated that both the states of Coahuila and Nuevo Leon were exceedingly desirous for the removal of all the Texan Indians from those states, hence if the General would permit





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the return of the captives, it would in all likelihood operate as an inducement for the Indians in Mexico to consent to remove as urged by Messrs. Atkinson and Williams, and even should they fail in obtaining the consent, in that event he was authorized by Governor Céspedes to assure the Commander of Texas, that he would return the captives to the custody of the officers of the U. S. Army, and would then invite their aid, to co-operate with their own troops, in driving the Indians from Mexico. General Augur while he would not alter his resolution, yet consented not to interpose any active opposition, and await the result of their application to his superior officers, the reply from General Sheridan was prompt and emphatic. No—but sent it up to the General of the Army, and from Washington came the order refusing the application of the Commissioners. The Indians have gone on their winding way to Fort Gibson, and now we are expecting advices from Commissioner Williams in Mexico.

“We have heretofore expressed our gratification at the result, indeed few actions of the government have afforded us such satisfaction. We know that the Mexican Government’s General and State, both directly and indirectly, have encouraged these red rascals in their hellish raids, have shared their plunder and afforded shelter and protection openly and effectually. We are well pleased at this action of MacKenzie’s and likewise at the prompt and decided approval of his act by our government. Doubtless the blow will be repeated, and the sooner the Indian Bureau Commissioners get out of the way the safer for them. We trust that the gentlemen of this Commission realize that the time for pow-wowing is past, nor is it necessary to exhaust the appropriation for





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the Commission to remain in Mexico, we would be pleased to have them here.

"There is another duty for our troops to perform, which the mere presence of the Commissioners on the Mexican side of the Rio Grande will tend only to delay—though it may prove, also, to complicate. We allude to the overwhelming necessity of breaking up Cortina's nest of thieves and outlaws, the seizure of Cortina, and bringing him to Brownsville to answer in the Courts to the several indictments preferred against him there for murder, arson and robbery. There are other chiefs or leaders of banditti, of less note, who have been for years devastating the lower Rio Grande border of Texas, that require the same pursuit and punishment. We wish that the whole Rio Grande frontier from the Rio Pecos to the Gulf could be made a military District, and MacKenzie placed in command, with adequate forces, then with Gen. Sherman's views sedulously enforced, peace, prosperity and good feeling would obtain through all that region."

But the Commissioners were not withdrawn and, contrary to this bitter prophet, the mission was a success.

In connection with all the bitterness that was being expressed there is another clipping, probably from the Herald although that is not certain, which shows the attitude of the Indian Chiefs at the time. It reads as follows:

"Col. Williams.—The following is a copy of a note written by Michael Thomas, Interpreter and Special Indian Commissioner, to the editor of the Express. The editor declined publishing it and therefore we are requested to do so.

"San Antonio, Tex., June 22, 1873.

"Mr. Express Editor:—You say that Col. Williams being on the Commission and the way he deals with





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the Indians makes them suspicious and that he had something to do with attacking the Kickapoos in 1864. All I want to tell you is that what you say about Col. Williams is not true—that you have printed incorrectly about him. I, and all the Kickapoos know that he is doing all he can for us and is our friend.

“WA-WEP-GUAH-GA.

“Michael Thomas,  
“Special Interpreter.”

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## DIARY OF SEA VOYAGE

In 1850 it was a very long way indeed from New York to San Francisco. Colonel (then Lieutenant) Thomas Greenhow Williams made the trip by way of Cape Horn. He had been ordered by the War Department to join the Second Regiment of Infantry in California.

He sailed from New York on June 22, 1850. Just five months later, on the night of November 22, his ship anchored in San Francisco Bay. He landed the next morning.

A diary kept by Colonel Williams during the long voyage, the original of which is in the possession of John Alexander James, the writer's grandson, gives a graphic description of the trip. The ship was the *Caroline Read*, a sailing vessel, with a comparatively small passenger list.

Following are excerpts from the diary:

“June 28: Thus far our passage has been pleasant with regard to weather. This being the first time I have ever traveled on the sea the novelty has not yet worn off so that I have not yet commenced any regular system of reading or study,



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which I propose to do. Besides McArthur (a fellow officer) and myself there are six other passengers.

"One or two of them seem to be very gentlemanly good sort of fellows and the rest, though very good they may be, are not very refined or well educated. All, however, seem disposed to get along as quietly as possible."

It did not take the young officer very long to grow weary, however. Under date of July 1 he notes, "The time on ship-board begins to hang rather heavily on my hands. After reading an hour or so after breakfast every morning Tier's *History of the French Revolution* my mind becomes tired and feels the want of some other kind of employment. With a Mr. Austin (another passenger) I generally have a game of backgammon, spending the rest of the time in reading other things and in talking. This morning, however, we commenced our Spanish studies, hoping to be able to converse in that language before reaching California."

Nearly ninety years ago it was much more necessary to know how to speak Spanish in California than now. Colonel Williams' visit there was only a short time after that section had become part of the United States.

Under the date of Sunday, July 28, the traveler wrote of the difficulties they were experiencing in trying to get away from head winds and calms.

"Four weeks since we left New York harbor, or rather Sandy Hook, and we are now in latitude 6 degrees 24 minutes North," he noted. "At this rate our passage will not be less than five and a half or six months. Most sincerely do I hope that it may be less for I am beginning to feel somewhat disgusted and wish myself on land. I think I will not again take a sea voyage on my own accord, and





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will be very contented to remain on land. At least not as long a one as this."

On August 1 he reported, "Still a head wind and strong current against us. After standing on the eastern tack as far as 22 west longitude we again yesterday evening turned on the same tack to avoid a strong current against us setting towards the north. The latitude at that time was about 1 degree 40 north. Latitude today at noon, 1 degree 50, having lost since yesterday."

Apparently they lost further ground because it was not until Monday, August 5, that they crossed the equator. He commented on the occasion, "Forty-three days since we left New York. By way of commemorating crossing the line (equator) a bottle of champagne was opened and lunch served. The difference in temperature as we go away from the sun is preceptible. I have been very agreeably disappointed in the great heat of the torrid zone, at least at sea. Since the ship passed the tropic of Cancer the thermometer has scarcely ever been higher than 85 degrees and has remained the same night and day, that it does not fall as the sun goes down, it being as warm at night as it is during the day. Nearly always there has been a breeze, enough to make it pleasant in my hammock which I have strung under a large boat just in front of the cabin door, in which I spend most of the time during the day."

They had good winds for a time after crossing the line so that by Sunday, August 11, they sighted the city of Pernambuco, also Olinda, on the Brazilian coast. A few days later they ran into a storm.

Under date of Sunday, August 18, Colonel Williams wrote, "Yesterday morning about eight o'clock a heavy rain came up, was succeeded by strong gusts of wind blowing first from one direction and then





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from another. Finally it blew steadily from the south-southwest from which quarter it has continued to blow with great violence ever since and we are now laying to under close-reefed top-sails. The waves are running higher than I ever had any conception of, the ship is pitching and rolling about like a cork tossed as easily. One gets a most forceful impression of man's impotence when compared with the mighty power of the wind and the waves.

"Still all appear as unconcerned and as careless as though they were comfortably seated at their fire-sides at home. A striking proof of the effect of habit. Only imagine the feelings of a man who, if he had never seen the ocean, were he transported here at this moment! All above us is as calm and as bright as a summer's day whilst out beneath us is the sea, its surface by its continued lashings covered with foam, raising enormous waves and dashing them toward us, threatening to overwhelm everything. Then just at our very feet sinking, as though touched with pity for our weakness, and slowly passing under, allowing us to ride over triumphant.

"This is the weather we are to expect when we reach Cape Horn. We are in the hands of a kind Providence. If it is His will we will pass safely through."

The storm continued through the following day and then moderated. By Tuesday it was a fair wind and the ship was making progress. But by the next Sunday, August 25, Colonel Williams complained, "Another week has passed and we are still amongst the twenties of south latitude.

"The days pass off almost imperceptibly. Scarcely anything happens to mark the time. Notwithstanding the monotony the time passes pleasantly. Do not think that I ever enjoyed better health in my life. For the last four or five days have abstained





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from smoking entirely. Do not think I shall ever resume the habit for I know that it is injurious. 'Twould not be could it be used moderately, but to do that I find impossible."

As they proceeded southward the temperature grew noticeably lower. The sea birds became numerous, more so, the diarist thought, as they neared the colder climate. Referring to the birds he wrote, "It is quite an amusement sometimes to catch them, either with a hook baited with a little fat meat, or entrap them with a string with a piece of bait tied to the end. All appear to have a fishy rank smell which would prevent them from being eaten unless one were almost famished."

On September 1 they were south of the forty-first parallel of south latitude. They would have to reach an approximate 59, Colonel Williams estimated, to round the Horn. On that day he wrote, "A beautiful sunshiny morning, the air cool and bracing, wind blowing very lightly from west by south. We have been seventy days out (the entire trip required 155 days) and perhaps it will be ninety before we reach the waters of the Pacific."

"The sea presents a different appearance from what we have usually seen. Instead of a deep blue color it appears a dirty brownish green. Old Captain Read, an old whaler, says it is filled with whale feed.

"Whilst walking on deck last night about nine o'clock a bright, almost dazzling light appeared suddenly towards the southwest. I looked up, at first supposing the moon to have made its appearance all at once. There was no moon, though, and the heavens were as cloudless as possible. The meteor, for I suppose it to be that, seemed stationary for a moment, then slowly moved off towards the west and disappeared before reaching the horizon.





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"Since we have been in southern latitudes I have noticed that the stars are more brilliant, or rather, that there are more large and beautiful ones visible. Venus, particularly, surpasses anything I have ever seen."

On the following day, September 2, the diarist reported a fine breeze and perceptibly cooler weather, the thermometer standing at 57 at about midday. The next day, September 3, he reported a falling barometer with prospects of a storm. On the fourth a westerly wind prevented passing in that direction and the diarist commented, "Which no doubt lengthens our passage around the Horn a week or more." By September 8 they had reached approximately latitude 50 and the weather was becoming more and more disagreeable.

On September 11 Colonel Williams wrote, "Since daylight this morning the sun has been shut in by clouds and a thick fog hanging around. The latitude not having been taken yesterday the Captain is very uncertain as to the position of the ship. We may be a few miles off Staten Land, or past it. So as to avoid danger we are standing off to the south-southeast in order to give it a wide berth, losing at the same time the advantage of a fair wind blowing from the north-northeast. We were only sure as to our position, nothing would be easier than to clear the Horn."

Before night, however, they reached Staten Land but by that time the direction of the wind was changing and by dark grew so violent that the ship hove to.

Colonel Williams described what almost was a collision, and paid his respects to the Captain, for whose intelligence he did not hold a high regard. He had just left the deck, he explained, at about





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8:30 that night when he heard the cry, "Sail-Ho," from the bow.

"When I got on deck our light had been shown on the forecastle and a minute or two after her's (the other ship's) appeared. Still she continued to near us.

"The Captain arrived on deck about the same time that I did, and on seeing the ship ordered the helm 'hard-up.' We still continued to come nearer and nearer. At last Captain Read \* \* \* gave the order to 'hard-down' the helm.

"The two ships seemed to be about thirty yards apart, head to head. Our last movement together with the effect of a wave, which seemed to have been sent almost on purpose, threw our unwelcome guest under our bow. She having more sail up and being fuller in the wind, passed our side rapidly not more than ten or twenty yards apart. Everyone who was on deck drew a longer breath when the danger was passed. For at one time we seemed to be drawn together by an invisible attraction.

"Early this morning, the wind having died down and shifted to the northward, all sail was set again and we were rapidly nearing land. Just before breakfast on going on deck I do not think I ever saw a more beautiful sight than the land presented. It appeared to be a mass of rock piled up, the tops covered with snow and here and there entirely enveloped in clouds, the whole surrounded by a kind of thin misty veil.

"By noon we approached near enough to distinguish the shrubs and bushes and the little waterfalls down the steep sides, swollen by the melting snows above, and the multitudes of birds that seemed to be hovering around the shore.

"The storm last night was the most severe we have had yet."





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By September 13 the writer reported the latitude at 56 degrees 7 minutes, and on the following day he wrote, "There was no land in sight yesterday except about breakfast time when we saw the highest peaks of the day before our stern. Whilst I am writing a snow squall has come up and the white flakes falling around. There is also a sail in sight, now very near, bearing down on us and perhaps it will come near enough to speak.

"Two or three more days fair weather, with a fair wind, will see us around, heading for California. And also warmer weather. Thermometer stands about 55."

Two days later, September 15, he wrote, "Yesterday just after dinner land was seen off our lee bow bearing about west-northwest from us. We continued nearing it until about 5 o'clock when the wind headed us off and we were obliged to tack ship and stand off to the south-southwest. The land in sight was pronounced to be CAPE HORN—the celebrated Cape Horn, the point we have been so long looking forward to.

"The appearance of it was very similar to Staten Land, high steep rock, jagged and worn in many places as if they had, indeed, stood the shock of many storms. The tops of the peaks are also covered with snow, and in the distance presented a most picturesque and beautiful scene. Our nearest point before tacking was, I suppose, about ten miles off. What is called the Horn consists of a number of small, detached, highly mountainous islands. Of the two most prominent I took a sketch a short time after first seeing them, that is to say, an outline, sufficiently accurate to be recognized.

"The weather for the last two days has been quite 'Cape Hornish,' a succession of snow and hail storms, sometimes rains. The wind heading us off





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again this morning returned to the other tack just before breakfast. Now heading west by south. Latitude today 56:30. Last night was coldest we have had yet, the thermometer in the afternoon 38. There being no fire in the cabin we are compelled to keep warm by walking often and with rapidity on deck, thereby keeping up the circulation of the blood. The land again in sight on the lee bow. Hurrah for a head wind and Cape Horn."

The next entry is dated September 18, three days later.

"Day before yesterday morning," the diary continues, "just before we took breakfast, a Bark was seen about half a mile ahead, standing on the same tack. As we appeared to be drawing on him, although the wind was blowing fresh, he commenced setting t'gallant sails. The Captain determined to give him chase and gave the same order. After breakfast it was very apparent that we were drawing on him very fast. About half an hour we passed under his lee, having set our flag, he set the British ensign. Though we passed very near we were not near enough to speak. Before dinner he was dead astern.

"The wind continued to blow fresh all day.

"Yesterday morning the wind was so violent and the sea so high that we were compelled to lay to until this morning. Until after supper we were on the larboard tack, standing near southwest to south-southwest. After that on the other tack and are now heading west-northwest. There being about two points variation of the compass makes about a north-west course. A large French ship under our lee all day yesterday.

"Last night was the roughest and most disagreeable we have yet had. Just such weather as might have been expected. Thermometer standing today





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in the cabin at 48. Barometer a little above 29. The sky being entirely hidden there was no observation yesterday. Suppose we are not far from 59 south latitude."

The following day he wrote, "A bright, sunshiny morning. Thermometer standing about 45. Scarcely a breath of air except now and then when one comes along and causes the sails to flap heavily back and forth, making each particular rope and block and chain to join all the cracks of masts and spars in sending out their peculiar sound.

"Added to that the long heavy swell of the ocean causing the ship to roll and toss, first head foremost and then from side to side. All of the passengers going about uneasily, each heartily sick and tired of the others, now walking the decks to warm their almost frozen hands and feet, then looking anxiously around the horizon vainly trying to see, in the large masses of white clouds floating through the clear atmosphere some indication of a breeze; stopping to feel from which direction the last breath of wind came that fanned the deck.

"At last, tired of seeing the same sights and hearing the same sounds, returns to the cabin to pass a few minutes in forgetfulness of his situation by reading. A calm in the tropics is, as we have already found, a most disagreeable thing, but one south of Cape Horn at this season is but little to be preferred.

"Latitude today, 57:05."

A fair wind came up but held only a short time because on Saturday, September 21, Colonel Williams wrote, "Another head wind yesterday and today. Each day seems to add to my disgust for this life and desire to be on shore."

Matters did not improve to any extent although the diarist was living in hope as witness his entry on Monday, September 23.





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"Day before yesterday there was no observation taken at noon, the day being cloudy, damp and disagreeable. Yesterday, latitude 51:10. We have been blessed with another head wind for the last forty-eight hours. Latitude today, 49:42, a very good run notwithstanding. As every day brings us nearer to California, so it also brings us milder climate and more pleasant weather.

"Last night was one, or rather the darkest night, we have yet seen. Though the moon was full only a few days ago, a dense heavy curtain of clouds seemed to hang around overhead. But beneath us the ocean seemed to be on fire. In our wake the glare illuminated the stern of the vessel and shone behind us. I have noticed before some little indication of this phosphorescent light, but never anything like so brilliant.

"The health of all since we left New York has been remarkably good. And our appetites, to judge by my own, ravenous. Though since the death of the last chicken, with the exception of a pig occasionally, we have had nothing fresh. The cook, very fortunately for us, has the art of making very good corn and wheat bread."

He was, however, in a wretched state of mind when next he made an entry in his diary. On September 26 he wrote, "Since last Monday the weather has been extremely disagreeable, and though not cold, it was raw, damp and chilly. All day yesterday was confined to the cabin in consequence of rain. No observation. Latitude today 47:49, not having made two degrees during the last two days.

"Oh! How I long to be on shore once again! To be entirely free of this hateful ship and some of its ignorant, prejudiced inmates. It will be a happy day when I can bid farewell to them forever and once more find myself in civilized society. I'll





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promise that hereafter I will consider well before I consent to shut myself up again with such persons. Were it not for my books and the company of Mac (McArthur, a brother officer) and Austin (a fellow passenger) don't think I could survive this voyage. Two months more though. What cannot be helped must be suffered with the best grace. As far as I can learn it is not the intention of the Captain to make any port at all, but go directly on."

On September 28 his entry deals largely with reminiscences of the past and some of his friends. The last paragraph shows his state of mind had not materially changed toward his immediate surroundings. Because the last paragraph for that day reads, "To return, though, to this disgusting place and ship-board. Latitude today was 43:42. None taken yesterday. Favorable wind but disagreeable weather."

Two days later he began to feel that spring was in the air. On Monday, September 30, he wrote in philosophical mood:

"Today is the most pleasant day we have yet seen in the Pacific. The air soft and delightfully cool and agreeable. It feels like some of those charming mornings we have at home in the month of April.

"The first wish that rises to one's mind is to be on shore, in the country. When alone the beauties of Nature can be enjoyed. Sitting in the warm rays of the sun one almost involuntarily listens for the cheerful but yet plaintive notes of the bluebird, and the happy joyful song of the house sparrow.

"But here the eye roves around in vain for something to break the monotony of the restless ocean and changing sky, imperceptibly blending into each other at the horizon.

"Even in the happiest moments of a man's life there is an unheard yearning, craving and sighing





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for the dim far-off unattainable, a void which all the pleasures and comforts around you cannot fill, neither can the mind conceive of the nature of the want. It can only be felt, to describe it is not in my power. May it not be the immortal spirit within is sighing and longing for food and occupation worthy of its immortality, impatient of the restraint imposed upon it by our feeble and infirm nature?

"Thus, I say, one feels often under those circumstances. How much stronger must that feeling be now?"

The following day the diarist noted an interesting experience.

"Feels like a fine morning in the Fall," he wrote. "Thermometer 59 at noon. Barometer stands at 30.

"This morning, directly after breakfast, a large 'Goney' was caught with a hook and line baited with a piece of pork. On measuring found his length from the end of the bill to the tip of the tail to be four feet, breadth from tip to tip just ten feet. His feathers were principally white with here and there a shade of black, brown and gray. This is the largest specimen of the feathered tribe I have ever seen. The Captain caused him to be skinned and stuffed."

For several days the entries in the diary show increasingly pleasant weather. Colonel Williams mentioned his reading with now and then a sentence showing how weary he was of the voyage.

"October 3: Latitude yesterday 30:22. Today the most pleasant day we have yet seen in the Pacific ocean. The air soft and balmy, and what is still better, from the right direction. Today for the first time since we left Cape Horn we can sit outside of the cabin and read with comfort.

"October 7, Monday: Our fifteenth Sunday at sea was a most delightful day. Latitude 25:42. For





## APPENDIX

the last ten days we have made but little longitude, nothing like a degree a day. We have today, it is supposed, the southeast trade winds and as our course is northwest, is nearly aft. The temperature so far on this side is much lower than it was in the Atlantic in the same latitude. Sixty-five degrees is about the highest, though today I suppose we are in the tropics. Should our luck continue as good for the next four or five weeks as during the last, our voyage will soon be ended. God grant it!"

It was not long before he began to worry about news from home. He had been at sea, entirely cut off from the world, nearly four months. Under date of October 13 he expressed hope for the end of the voyage and with it wondered what news he would receive.

"Latitude today at noon, 7:23," he wrote on that date. "With good fortune there now remain but a few more Sundays to be spent by us on the bosom of the deep. Three or four more and we will have reached California. (As a matter of fact there were five more Sundays on board.)

"This is the last Sunday I will, perhaps, spend in the Southern ocean. And a more pleasant or delightful day could not be conceived in a latitude where the rays of the sun are perpendicular.

"Each day seems to add to my anxiety to hear from home. What news shall we receive? Will it be good or bad? What may not have happened during the last four or five months? My blessed Mother! How anxiously are thoughts looking forward to the time when she shall learn of my safe arrival, or it may be that she is, this Holy day, looking down from above on the wanderings of her loving son. God forbid the last! But may He, in His infinite goodness, grant that it may be in my power to guide, comfort and support her during





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the rest of her days, Amen! Or rather that she should be still alive.

"If dead, may she always overlook my footsteps, and that none of my thoughts or actions may be unworthy or such as to cause a blush or a pang for her son."

Everything went well. Wednesday afternoon, October 16, they crossed the "line," the equator. On that day he wrote, "Today at noon within ten miles of the line. The thermometer stands at about 75. I could hardly have conceived it possible that the weather would be so pleasant. With good luck we will reach San Francisco within twenty days."

It was actually much nearer forty days before they landed, ample time for the young officer's impatience and anger at the delay to be aroused. Fair winds continued several days but the weather turned bad, rainy and disagreeable, and the wind fell almost to nothing.

Wednesday, October 23, was an exciting day for the passengers on the *Caroline Read*. Colonel Williams described it in his entry dated the following day.

"Yesterday was decidedly the most exciting and interesting day we have yet had. Not very long after breakfast a sail was discovered on lee bow.

Nearing each other fast the Captain decided to speak. It proved to be the bark, 'Cachelot,' from San Francisco to Panama. Seemed to have many passengers on board. We passed so rapidly that there was no time to say much.

"Just after she passed another sail was seen coming in the same direction. In less than an hour the ship, 'Diadem,' surged up alongside us, spoke, and at our request sent a boat to us with some newspapers. One from the United States and the rest from California. (Note the differentiation between





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the United States and California, remembering this was shortly after the war with Mexico!)

"From the papers we learned of the death of General Taylor which took place on the ninth of July within three weeks after we left New York. He died of cholera. Fillmore, of course, is President; Daniel Webster, Secretary of State; General Scott was acting Secretary of War. We have not been able to find out the other members of the Cabinet. Hon. R. M. T. Conrad had been offered Secretary of War, result not known. There seems to be difficulty between the United States and Texas about the boundary.

"It was a real pleasure after having been confined, or rather shut off from the world, to read these newspapers. Am sorry to hear of the death of General Taylor. We now have a Northern President, one, too, who will no doubt go with the North on the great question of slavery should he have an opportunity of acting.

"The mounted companies of artillery have been increased to 64 men. And those infantry companies stationed on the frontier and in California are to be increased to 74 men, one half to be mounted.

"Latitude yesterday 12:25; today, 13:23. The wind is from the northeast. Our standing is west-northwest. Why so much west I cannot understand."

After days in which little progress was made the diarist wrote heatedly, "Head winds, head winds, head winds, damn it! We will be forty days now going a distance we might with a fair wind go in seven. If you catch me in such another scrape call me a damned fool if you please."

In calmer vein he wrote, "Nearly a calm today, weather much cooler. Will in a few days have to resume our coats. Have not worn one more than





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once or twice since we have been out, except whilst at Cape Horn. No one on board wears a coat at meals or at other times. Seemed quite strange at first. Soon not noticed it."

On November 4 he complained, "Although only twelve days since we spoke those vessels from San Francisco, it seems an age. We then thought we were only about two weeks' sail from port but, alas, four weeks will find us out of sight thereof.

"Well, let us try and be contented, but it is a hard matter. This will doubtless prove the most tedious part of our trip for thinking of the shore one can neither read nor write with any satisfaction. The mind is constantly fretful and discontented. The last thing on going to bed and the first thought on rising in the morning is of the state of the weather or wind, hoping that every hour may bring a change for the better. In three days we might be in port with fair wind. That reflection tends to make us more discontented than if we were 5,000 miles off. For the last week I have done literally nothing on account of that feeling. I shall make an exertion today to shake off such disagreeable thoughts.

"We retire to bed now about 8:30 p. m. and rise about 7:30 a. m., spending nearly half the time in bed. Thermometer stands about 70 for several days past."

A revealing glimpse of an angle of Colonel Williams' character is in a quotation which he thought so beautiful he copied it into his diary. He had been reading, he wrote, Moore's *Life of Sheridan*.

"It is one of those books from the little old library at Oakhill," he noted, "and in many places bears marks of having been carefully and critically read by Mr. John Nelson. Many choice passages are marked, showing a refined and cultivated taste





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on his part. I don't know when I have experienced more pleasure in the perusal of a book.

"There is one passage in his speech during the trial of Warren Hastings, marked by Mr. Nelson, which is indeed beautiful. Here it is:

" 'And yet, my Lords, how can I support the claim of filial love by argument, much less the affection of a son to a Mother where love loses its awe, and veneration is mixed with tenderness? What can I say upon such a subject, what can I do but repeat the ready truths which with the quick impulse of the mind, must spring to the lips of every man on such a theme? Filial love! The morality of instinct, the sacrament of duty, or rather, let me say it is miscalled duty for it flows from the heart without effort, and is its delight, and indulgence its enjoyment. It is guided, not by the slow dictates of reason, it awaits not the encouragement from reflection or thought. It asks no aid of memory. It is innate, but active consciousness of having been the object of a thousand tender solitudes, a thousand waking watchful cares, of meek anxiety and patient sacrifices, unremarked and unrequested by the object. It is a gratitude founded upon a conviction of obligations not remembered, because conferred before the tender reason could acknowledge or the infant memory record them, a gratitude and affection which no circumstances should subdue, and which few can strengthen. A gratitude in which every injury from the object, though it may be blind regret, should never breed resentment. An affection which can be increased only by the decay of those to whom we owe it, and which is then most fervent when the tremulous voice of age, restless in its feebleness, requires the natural protector of its cold decline.'

"The thoughts expressed in the above piece speak





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at once to every heart who felt the influence of a mother's love, as well for their truthfulness as beauty of expression. God grant it may be my painfully pleasant task to answer that tremulous voice, assist that feebleness, and soothe that cold decline."

In an entry dated November 9 Colonel Williams complained that "During the past 24 hours we have not made twenty miles north." On the following day, Sunday, November 10, he expressed the hope it would be the last Sunday to be spent on the ocean. It wasn't. The week fled past and on the following Sunday there is this entry:

"Another week finds us but little, if any, nearer than a week ago. Done nothing the last 24 hours. No wind. To be within three days' sail of Port and to be a fortnight making the distance is, to say the least of it, provoking. We may be another two weeks making the distance yet."

This, however, proved to be overly pessimistic. But there was much of anxiety before they could land. In fact during the last three days before landing there were the only occasions, except the single incident near Cape Horn when his own and another vessel nearly collided, where Colonel Williams expressed a feeling of real danger.

He related that during November 18 and 19 a wind sprang up and blew heavily, but not dangerously except there was a heavy fog, with the result that although less than fifty miles from port the ship was put about to "lie to" during the night, or during the continuance of the storm. In addition to wind there was a heavy rain the night of the nineteenth which lasted until about ten o'clock the morning of the twentieth.

"Added to the confusion and danger," the diarist wrote, "we were in the vicinity of rocks laid down on the chart as 'doubtful.' It was quite a disagree-





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able time. About 8:30 p. m. the waves were threatening to sweep everything off deck. One jib was lost, forecastle split, etc."

When the sun came out the man aloft sang out the joyous cry, "Land-ho, ahead."

Colonel Williams continued: "Half an hour apart the rocks we were fearful of were plainly visible, showing that last evening we were very close to them.

"There were seven other ships in sight this morning, one or two ahead, the rest behind us. Two clusters of rocks were visible, between which one of the ships ahead is now standing and rapidly leaving us. But we are keeping off to leeward, losing thereby about twenty miles."

He concluded his entry for the day by complaining bitterly because the Captain did not take his ship into the harbor.

There was no entry dated November 21, but the next day a long recital told the graphic story of two nights and two days spent in dodging treacherous rocks near the mouth of the harbor.

"Last night and the night before," wrote Colonel Williams, "have been decidedly the most disagreeable ones we have yet had, not to say the most dangerous. On the night of the twentieth everything at sunset bid fair to have a quiet, still night, but a little after midnight a strong southeast wind was accompanied by rain and fog. Our position was about midway between the rocks, 25 miles due west of the mouth of the harbor and the mainland. The coast runs northwest and southeast. So our object was to weather the rocks. We stood, therefore, first on one tack then the other in order to gain as much to windward as possible. The current being very strong here there was much uncertainty as to whether we could weather the rocks. All





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night there was continual uproar. I have not had more than seven hours sleep for the last two nights, none during the day at all.

"At last, to the joy of all, day broke and for a time the clouds appeared to break, the rain stopped and about 8 o'clock a. m. the rocks were visible on our weather bow, we standing southwest westerly, we stood on the other tack in towards the harbor. But on getting within a mile of the breakers we found ourselves to the leeward of the entrance. The consequence thereof was that we had to stand off and try to master those rocks again, which we were not able to do, the tide setting against us.

"Last night was a second edition of the night before. Now, this morning, after having made numberless tacks during the night, we found ourselves very well to the windward of those formidable and much dreaded rocks. The wind was such as to let us go with it almost free, and make the entrance to the Bay. So after breakfast, it having cleared off, all sail was made and we were bounding towards the mouth of the Bay at a fine rate. Between ten and eleven a. m. we overhauled the ship, 'Element,' from New York thirty days ahead of us. We continued to stand on until the breakers were plainly visible on both sides of the entrance. We had nothing to do but go right ahead."

But the Captain decided not to go on but to "ware ship," much to the disgust of the young officer who added several hundred words of commentary, most of it bitter, on the situation.

However that night about 11 o'clock anchor was dropped in the harbor and the next morning the passengers were ashore. The diarist's only comment after the landing was, "After sundry quite narrow escapes just about the entrance of the harbor, we





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cast anchor about 11 p. m. in the Bay about a mile from the city. The next morning landed."

Colonel Williams gave a brief description of San Francisco as he saw it in November, 1850.

"The appearance of San Francisco surprised me exceedingly," he wrote. "In the streets one sees people of every clime and nation on the face of the earth. Every other house is either a (bawdy) house or a gambling establishment. The principal streets are paved with wood and as the town several times has burnt down many of the houses are really very good indeed. When one looks at this large and populous town, the forest of masts around the wharves and thinks that only two years ago two or three detached houses and a dozen tents were the only signs of a city destined to be the Capital of the Pacific Coast of North America, words are wanting to express the feelings of wonder and amazement.

"Benecia (where he reported for duty) is a very large town—on paper—but can, in fact, hardly be called a village. It may one of these days be a third or fourth rate city. The Barracks are situated about two miles from the town in a northeasterly direction."

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The following is taken from an official extract from the records at the United States Military Academy at West Point. It is a brief record of the stay of Colonel Thomas Greenhow Williams at the Academy from his admission July 1, 1843, to his graduation and appointment as second lieutenant, United States army, four years later.

Name—Williams, Thomas Greenhow

Appointed from—At Large





## I REMEMBER

Admitted—July 1, 1845

Age at date of admission—17 years 2 months

Legal residence—Richmond, Henrico County, Va.

Name of parent or guardian—William Williams,  
Richmond, Va.

Order of general merit—Fourth Class Year 19

Third Class Year 19 Second Class Year 33 First  
Class Year 32

Graduated No. 32 in a class of 43 members.

Commissioned in the U. S. Army as Brevet 2d  
Lieutenant, 2d Infantry, July 1, 1849

Appointed Captain, U. S. Corps of Cadets, September 18, 1848.

---

Originals of the following documents are in the possession of John Alexander James, grandson of John James.

Included in these documents, all of which pertain to the pioneer, John James, is his Amnesty Parole following the War Between the States, signed by President Andrew Johnson; his Amnesty Oath; his original parole; certification that he took the Amnesty Oath, and his Registry of Voting Oath. All of these were necessary on the part of those who had taken part in the Confederacy in order to become again citizens of the United States.

There follows also several bills of sale whereby John James became legally possessed of various slaves. They are appended for their historic interest and value.

---

## AMNESTY PAROLE

ANDREW JOHNSON

President of the United States of America, to all to



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whom these presents may come, Greeting: Whereas John James of San Antonio, Texas, by taking part in the late rebellion against the Government of the United States, has made himself liable to heavy pains and penalties; And Whereas, the circumstances of his case render him a proper object of Executive Clemency; Now, therefore, be it known, that I, Andrew Johnson, President of the United States of America, in consideration of the premises, divers other good and sufficient reasons me thereto moving, do hereby grant to the said John James a full pardon and amnesty for all the offenses by him committed, arising from participation, direct or implied, in the said rebellion, conditioned as follows:

1st. This pardon to be of no effect until the said John James shall take the oath prescribed in the Proclamation of the President, dated May 29, 1865.

2nd. To be void and of no effect if the said John James shall hereafter, at any time, acquire any property whatever in slaves, or make use of slave labor.

3rd. That the said John James first pay all costs which may have accrued in any proceedings instituted or pending against his person or property, before the date of the acceptance of this warrant.

4th. That the said John James shall not, by virtue of this warrant, claim any property or the proceeds of any property that has been sold by the order, judgment or decree of the Court under the confiscation laws of the United States.

5th. That the said John James will notify the Secretary of State, in writing, that he has received and accepted the foregoing pardon.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto signed my





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name and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done in the City of Washington this eighth day of December, A. D. 1865, and of the Independence of the United States the Ninetieth.

(Signed) ANDREW JOHNSON

(Seal of the United States)

By the President.

(Signed) WILLIAM SEWARD, Secretary of State.

---

## AMNESTY OATH

United States of America

District Court of the United States for the Western District of Texas at Austin.

Hon. Thomas H. Duval, Judge.

Personally appeared before me, Matthew Hopkins, clerk of the District Court of the United States for the Western District of Texas, at Austin, John James, a citizen of Bexar County, Texas, worth about Twenty Thousand Dollars and applying for a special pardon to save the doubt, who being duly sworn says: "I do solemnly swear or affirm, in the presence of Almighty God, that I will hereafter faithfully defend the Constitution of the United States, and the union of the States thereunder, and that I will, in like manner, abide by and faithfully support all laws and proclamations which have been made during the existing rebellion with reference to the emancipation of Slaves," and subscribed the same:

(Signed) JOHN JAMES





# THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY.

## ALL MESSAGES TAKEN BY THIS COMPANY SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING TERMS:

To guard against mistakes, the sender of a message should order it written; that is, telegraphed back to the originating office. For repeat, one call for each word. The Company is not responsible for mistakes or delays in the transmission or delivery, or for the loss of any message, except in cases where the sender has paid for the message by the use of the Company's money, or where the sender has paid for the message by the use of the Company's money, or where the sender has paid for the message by the use of the Company's money.

GEO. H. MUMFORD, Secretary.

THOS. T. FORT, General Superintendent, New York.

WILLIAM ORTON, President.

March 3' 1873

Sent the following Message subject to the above terms which are agreed to.

To General Meyer of San Antonio Texas

It gives me great pleasure to  
 announce that Congress has just  
~~passed~~ appropriated one hundred  
 thousand dollars for our debt  
 Thos G. Williams



CHIEF MARSHALLS BRIGAD TITICACABA COMPANY

THE FOLLOWING IS A LIST OF THE MEMBERS OF THE BRIGADE

1893

1. *John J. Smith*

2. *John J. Smith*

CHIEF MARSHALLS BRIGAD TITICACABA COMPANY

## APPENDIX

To certify which I have hereunto set my hand and the seal of the Court at Austin this 14th day of August, 1865.

(Signed)

M. HOPKINS, Clerk.

---

## PAROLE

San Antonio, Texas  
August 25, 1865.

No. 2

John James, Pri. of A Company Reserve Corps C S A residing in San Antonio, Texas, having been, with the approval of the proper authorities, paroled, is permitted to return to his home, not to be disturbed by the United States Authorities so long as he observes his parole and the laws in force where he may reside.

By order of Major General Marritt

Geo. A. Willis

Maj. W. Ellcar, paroling officer.

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## TOOK AMNESTY OATH

United States of America

This is to certify that John James a citizen of Bexar County has taken the oath of amnesty as prescribed in the Amnesty Proclamation of the President of the United States, and that he has been placed on the register of the County of Bexar as a voter.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my



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name and the seal of the County Court at San Antonio this 25th day of April, A. D. 1866.

Attested: Payton Smythe  
County Clerk

A. SIMERING,  
Chief Justice of  
Bexar County

---

## REGISTRY OF VOTING OATH

The State of Texas  
County of Bexar, Personally appeared before me  
the undersigned authority

John James

who being duly sworn says: "I do solemnly swear or affirm in the presence of Almighty God that I will hereafter faithfully defend the constitution of the United States and the union of the States thereunder and that I will in like manner abide by and faithfully support all laws and proclamations which have been made during the existing rebellion with reference to the emancipation of slaves, so help me God," And subscribed the same,

(Signed)

JOHN JAMES

To certify which I hereunto sign my name and affix the impress of my official seal at office in San Antonio, the 25th day of April, A. D. 1866.

(Signed)

A. SIMERING  
Chief J.





## APPENDIX

### TITLE PAPERS TO SLAVES

State of Texas  
Bexar County

Know all men by these presents that I, James R. Sweet, of the City of San Antonio, County and State aforesaid, for and in consideration of the sum of Seven Hundred Dollars to me in hand paid, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, by John James, of said County and City, have bargained sold and conveyed and by these presents do sell, bargain and convey unto the said John James, his heirs and executors, assigns and administrators, one Negro Girl, of light yellow color named Anne about seventeen years of age, warranting her sound in mind and body. The said Negro girl being the same conveyed to me by bill of sale from I. J. Middleton and Maia Middleton on the seventh day of January 1853.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and scroll by way of seal this 28 April 1853.

Witnesses: JAMES R. SWEET (Scroll)  
John H. Archibald  
Alonzo L. Niblack

\* \* \*

State of Texas, County of Bexar:

Know all men by these presents that I, Geo. M. Martin, of the County and State aforesaid have this day for and in consideration of the sum of Seven Hundred Dollars to me in hand paid by John James of County and State aforesaid, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, bargained, sold and delivered to him the said John James one negro man, Slave for life, named Squir of dark complexion, aged about twenty-one years; said man Squir, slave, I warrant to be perfectly sound in mind and body and free



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from all the maladies known to the law. And I do further warrant the title to said slave to him the said James against any person or persons claiming or to claim any part or interest in the said slave. Said man slave Squir being the same purchased by me of F. Groos of Eagle Pass as per bill of sale dated October 23, 1855 which is delivered with this and made a part thereof. In testimony of all of which I hereunto set my hand and scroll by way of seal this 1st day of November A. D. 1855.

Witnesses: GEO. M. MARTIN (Scroll)  
J. R. Sweet  
H. B. Adams

• • •

State of Texas  
County of Hays

For and in consideration of the sum of One Thousand Dollars cash in hand paid to me by John James of San Antonio, I have sold to him, the said James a negro girl named Caroline aged about 23 years, and I warrant her sound, of good character and free from all the maladies prescribed by law. Said negro girl was bought by me from Dr. Dailey of this county about two years ago.

Given under my hand and scroll for seal, this fourth day of June A. D. 1855 at my farm near San Marcos.

Witnesses present: JAMES L. MALONE  
Robert Malone

• • •

State of Texas  
County of Bexar

Know all men by these presents that I, Edmund A. Barker, have this day sold to John James of the City of San Antonio for the sum of Five Hundred





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and Seventy-five Dollars which I have received in hand, a negro boy named Edom, aged about eleven years, and do warrant the title to him, the said John James, and also that he is healthy and free from the maladies prescribed by law.

San Antonio, December 12 A. D. 1855.

C. Rector

EDMUND A. BARKER

Wm. R. Wiseman

---

### MEMBERS OF DEFENSE SOCIETY

The "Southern Defense Aid Society" was organized on June 24, 1861. It had for its avowed purpose the aid of the South in its cause. In San Antonio its membership consisted of the following:

Thos. J. Devine, one of three commissioners to receive the surrender of General Twiggs in February, 1861; Jno. A. Wilcox, lawyer and veteran of war with Mexico; Jno. H. Duncan, lawyer; Jas. H. French, mayor of San Antonio nearly twenty years; Col. Henry C. King, newspaper man; P. G. Edwards; S. N. Hedges; G. W. Caldwell, business man and politician; H. Mayer; E. Abat; S. A. Maverick, pioneer lawyer and member of surrender commission; Thos. H. Stribling, judge; G. W. Palmer; W. B. Leigh; I. P. Simpson, judge, later law partner of John H. James; James Duff; R. F. Bunting; Wm. Groesbeck; E. R. Norton and H. D. Norton, hardware merchants; G. Schleicher; C. Upson, lawyer, later Congressman; John James, civil engineer; T. Johnson; N. O. Green, lawyer, father of the late Judge Robert B. Green; N. A. Mitchell, veteran of San Jacinto; S. Sampson; Warwick Tunstall, attorney; G. P. Devine, wealthy pioneer, brother of Thos. Devine; J. D. Wade; Jno. C. French, owner of French



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building, brother of Mayor; G. B. Cochran; Dan'l Devine, brother of Thos. and G. P.; James R. Sweet, former mayor, brother-in-law of John James and father of Alex Sweet, humorist; Jesse Boring.

---

## MOVE TO DIVIDE TEXAS

In 1868 a movement was organized to divide the state of Texas into two or more states. Numerous arguments were put forth in support of the plan. The chief cause lay in the displeasure of West Texans over the railroad situation. Large grants of land were made by the state to induce railroads to build into Texas. Most of the lands granted were in West Texas. Nearly all the rails were laid in the eastern section.

On April 10, 1868, there was called in San Antonio a meeting of "The Committee upon the Division of the State." It was held at the Menger hotel at four o'clock on a Friday afternoon. The meeting, after electing George W. Brackenridge as president and John James as secretary, passed the following resolutions:

That the Chairman be requested to act for the Committee at Washington during his forthcoming visit there and that he be authorized to procure the assistance of C. N. Riottee to aid him.

That the Committee agreed to raise five hundred dollars in currency to be disbursed, as much as might be necessary, by the Chairman to aid and further the desired object.

That a committee of three consisting of Gamble, Thielepape and James procure information as to the action of parties to whom circulars and blank petitions were sent, and report to the Committee.





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The meeting then adjourned. The minutes show the following were present:

George W. Brackenridge, pioneer, philanthropist, founder of San Antonio National bank and city water works; John James, civil engineer and famous as surveyor; Charles Griesenbeck, German pioneer, cotton broker and bank cashier; Peter Gallagher, capitalist and real estate owner; James Vance, merchant with his brother, William; W. C. A. Thielepape, early mayor of San Antonio; Wm. C. Gamble; J. H. Kampmann, contractor and builder; David Bell, son of pioneer jeweler, Sam Bell; F. Groos, merchant and founder of Groos National bank; A. Nette, druggist with store where Aztec theatre now stands; D. Stumberg, veteran of Mexican war; E. Pentenreider.

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